

SILURIAN BOOKS



GWYNFOR EVANS.

This volume is the work of the President of the Welsh Nationalists, and is the first of a series representing the views of members of the various political parties on Welsh problems.

LLANDEBIE CARMS.



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AND
WALES**

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PRICE - TWO SHILLINGS

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Llyfrau'r Dryw
LLANABIE

PREFACE.

THIS essay attempts to outline the main features of nationalist policy in Wales. No writer on Welsh politics can fail to be deeply aware of the gravity of the crisis in the life of the Welsh nation, and in these pages I have tried to convey some sense of the urgent and imperative need for a Welsh Parliament. If the institution of a legislature for Wales is delayed beyond the ending of American economic assistance to Britain, the disintegration of Welsh nationality may be hastened calamitously. The burden of this essay, therefore, is that self-government is an immediate and indispensable necessity if Wales is to survive as a nation.

The lectures given at the 1949 Summer School of Plaid Cymru proved a valuable stimulant to the writer, which I have pleasure in acknowledging. They were given by Dr. Gwenan Jones, Mr. Kitchener Davies, Mr. Emrys Owen, Mr. Roy Lewis and Mr. J. Gwyn Griffiths. No one who writes on Welsh nationalism can avoid a deep obligation to Mr. Saunders Lewis, and many of his ideas have found a place in this essay. I owe a heavy debt to Dr. Noelle Davies and Dr. D. J. Davies, whose books and pamphlets I have used without burdening the text with acknowledgments in footnotes, and who generously placed at my disposal their valuable notes on the economic situation in Wales. Finally, I have to thank Dr. Pennar Davies for his kindness in reading through the manuscript and making many valuable suggestions.

I.—PLAID CYMRU AND WALES.

PLAID Cymru, the only independent Welsh political party, is the movement of those who give Wales their first political loyalty. Its policy is grounded in the fact of Welsh nationality. For the Welsh nation it demands, in the first instance as a moral right, the status of a free nation.

For more than four centuries Wales has been incorporated in England. She is denied the elementary rights of nationhood and, with neither Parliament nor Government of her own, is at the mercy of actions and events entirely outside her control. As a nation she has neither the power effectively to protect and develop her life nor the power, so essential to national communities to-day, to adapt herself to changes in economic and social circumstances which can be foreseen. The presence of thirty-six representatives in the imperial Parliament is a palliative which does little to lessen her frustration.

In consequence the life of Wales is in grave jeopardy. A nation cradled in the Roman Empire, a Celtic nation which, of all the Celtic nations, has still the most vigorous language and literature, a small nation of infinite possibilities—this nation is faced with extinction. If Wales continues much longer a part of England, historians a century hence will be able to chronicle the time of her death.

Yet those most anxious for her future would be the first to insist upon the tremendous potentialities which still lie latent in her. Wales can live, and live with a fullness of life hitherto unknown to her. Her salvation depends upon this condition, that her people awaken to a realisation of her desperate plight, to a vivid sense of the value of the community which is being destroyed,

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and act as a nation with the urgency which this time of supreme crisis in her history demands. The action, to be effective, must be political. The work of cultural and social movements for Wales is invaluable, but no such movement can be enough to save her.

Wales can survive only as a free nation. That freedom can be won only by vigorous and determined political action by the Welsh people.

In this conviction Plaid Cymru demands for Wales the responsibility for developing her life through her own democratic Parliament and Government. Wales must achieve statehood. Possessed of this status, she can lay firmer the foundations of social justice in her small territory, and ensure that the national heritage be safeguarded, enriched and made the possession of all Welshmen.

The achievement of this status must be, and can only be, the result of the efforts of the Welsh people themselves in their national movement. The struggle itself has a function of immense importance in awakening and deepening Welsh consciousness, in bringing a closer cohesion among the people and in strengthening the national will to live. A nation enjoying a high degree of cohesion alone can gather the finest fruits of self-government. An indigenous Government does much to produce this cohesion in providing a focus for the national energies and aspirations and a rallying-point for the creative forces of the nation. A Welsh Parliament and Government would compel Welshmen to think constantly as Welshmen of the interests of their own country. The solidarity necessary to self-government is usually present in a higher degree in small nations than in big countries, and it can be so in a healthy Wales, but in her present debilitated condition it is a vital function of the struggle for freedom to create it.

In view of the condition of Wales there is urgent need, quite apart from political considerations, to strengthen the nation's will to live. Wales is fighting for her existence,

with no certainty that in another half-century there will be more than disconnected pockets of Welsh life and speech surviving. When healthy nations face a threat to their life, even if it is their economic life alone which is threatened, they sink internal differences and unite to defend it. Those who stand outside the national struggle are despised and frequently ostracised. The failure to unite to safeguard the national community in Wales, and to concentrate on the job until the peril is passed, is the measure of the danger in which the nation stands. It affords a just method of judging the value of the professions of those whose most frequent words on the issue are "I am as good a Welshman as any, but..."

The scene which afflicts the eyes of Welshmen is that of the deep division of their people on issues which are irrelevant to the national question. Most Welshmen give their allegiance to one or other of the three English Parties, to which the problem of Wales is a very minor matter indeed.

Differences in social and economic policy would not be so detrimental, even in the present critical position, if the Parties were independent Welsh Parties which were largely agreed upon self-government. Despite their differences, the welfare and freedom of Wales would be the prime concern of such Parties. But it is not amongst Welsh Parties that Welshmen are divided, but amongst Parties whose membership is overwhelmingly English. For them the fate of Wales is one of the least important of questions. Since they are English in nationality and sympathy and instinct, they are also English in policy. Some small reform concerning Wales may be added to their programmes for the sake of Welsh votes, but their overriding concern is for England, her welfare and, even more, her power and glory. It is true that, with an eye to the "Celtic fringe," England is often called "Britain," but the life of the small nations on the fringe has a negligible influence on the conscious thought or the unconscious impulses of the masses or the leaders in the

English Parties. Their normal attitude is one of impatience with those "narrow nationalists" who are so foolishly concerned with the life of their own small nations, and whose refusal to sacrifice them on the altar of English well-being and prestige is so incomprehensible.

It is not surprising that, even inside Wales, the work of these Parties should be characterised by the complete absence of a sense of urgency concerning the fate of Wales. Have they ever been known to organise campaigns, publish literature and use their great resources to stir and rally the people of this threatened nation? One searches the pages of the history of the last half-century without finding one such manifestation of a passionate concern for Wales.

If it be agreed that the salvation of Wales must be accomplished by the Welsh people themselves, and that the most important work must be done in Wales amongst the people, it surely follows that the English Parties are not the bodies to do the job. Their nature is such that they can never reinvigorate the national life. The tragedy is that Welshmen should have so long given these essentially alien bodies their support. Were there no likelihood of Welshmen acting politically as Welshmen in their national Party or Parties, there would be more than enough reason for despairing of the future of Wales.

Plaid Cymru exists because some thousands of Welshmen have the courage of their conviction that Wales must save herself by her own exertions, through her own independent movement. These at least have resisted the subtle temptation of thinking that the way to serve their land is by influencing the English Parties from the inside. Welshmen should beware of a course which keeps their Welsh conscience inviolate without jeopardising their political or professional career. The building of an independent national movement is bound to be costly to those engaged in it. Of necessity its members must choose the political wilderness before social advancement and honours. Plaid Cymru hopes that it is the nucleus of

a great movement of a generation prepared to pay the price of freedom and justice for Wales, a movement racy of the soil of Wales, which will be "a force for life and creativeness" residing in the Welsh people.

No part of nationalist policy is of more vital importance than its insistence upon securing for Wales her due place in the international order. Welsh nationalists have an almost insatiable interest in the life of other nations, and their desire to see Wales a free and self-respecting nation amongst them is profound. This Welsh internationalism cannot find its natural expression, however, until the rights of Welsh nationhood are acknowledged. They will not be acknowledged until Welshmen respond to the call of their nation. Their nation is Wales. Not Britain. There is no British nation. There are three nations on this island—England, Scotland and Wales. This elementary fact is remembered by Welshmen in an Eisteddfod but overlooked in most political assemblies. Unless it becomes the governing factor in Welsh political life the prospect for Wales is forbidding.

It is therefore all-important to drive home in Wales a fact which is as natural to the citizens of most nations as breathing, namely that a man's first political allegiance is due to his own nation, and not to a state dominated by another nation. When that fact is absorbed there will be no room in Wales for English Parties any more than there is in England to-day for French or Spanish Parties. It has been argued that since the task of national regeneration lies inside Wales herself no movement whose membership and inspiration are for the most part outside Wales can accomplish it. No Moscow or London-centred Party can regenerate Wales. This is a task for a movement grounded in the history and culture of the Welsh nation.

The measure of self-government which Wales attains will depend directly upon the strength of the national movement. If its strength is negligible no attempt at all will be made to establish the institutions of self-government. The English Government has never granted

nations more autonomy than it has felt compelled to give. Long and wide experience of national movements through the Empire has given the London Government a healthy respect for them. It knows well when it is time to yield to national demands, and when they can be resisted with impunity. It knows that it can afford to ignore with contempt the importunity of Welshmen who, while demanding self-government for their country, show the true measure of their determination to achieve it by remaining quietly in one or other of the English Parties. Welsh allegiance to the present Labour, Liberal or Tory Parties is equivalent to an assurance that the Government of the day has nothing to fear from Wales, and that it need not, therefore, grant her demands. Self-government will be attained when the imperial Government feels that it can no longer safely withhold it. That depends upon the strength of the national movement.

II.—THE PLACE OF THE NATION.

THE policy of Welsh nationalism is best understood as a natural development of the view of man as a person so deeply rooted in society that his well-being is inextricably bound up with the society to which he belongs. Nationalists are concerned with the whole man, not with some one aspect of his life. Man is neither economic man nor political man, however important economics and politics may be to him. He is a member of many groupings, all of which contribute to the enriching of his personality. His work, and the societies connected with his work, are of the greatest importance to him; but so too are family, neighbourhood and church, cultural and recreational societies. These communities cohere in the nation, which through her language, traditions, culture and history, safeguards the values of the past and transmits them to the future. The nation is a community of communities.

Man's complex personality is spun into the warp and woof of society, and he cannot be torn out of the society in which he was nurtured without causing him grave injury. Equally true is the corollary, that to injure society is to injure its members.

There is thus an organic relationship between man and his nation which cannot be severed without violence to both. When the English Government forced the transfer of 500,000 Welshmen from Wales to England in the inter-war years it did irreparable damage both to Wales and to the persons uprooted.

Welsh nationalists aver that the fundamental reality in society is the human person, and they ask: In what kind of society can he most fully realise his potentialities? Centralists of all political persuasions start from a different premise. Looking at society as an aggregate of individuals they ask: How can this entity be run most efficiently?

The one places his emphasis on building up from the local community, the other upon planning from the centre. The one, regarding responsibility as a condition of moral growth, would distribute it widely among the groups and individuals of society; the other would tend to concentrate as much as possible in a few hands on the erroneous assumption that such concentration is more efficient. The one would have the greatest possible variety of industry in each region, to ensure both stability and a wide choice of occupation; the other would see in this a lessening of the efficiency of big industrial units. The one would develop the agricultural potential of the country to its fullest extent; the other would incline to think it more efficient to buy cheaply from abroad. The one would give priority to the needs of the spiritual life of the community, the other to its material efficiency.

These and many other differences of emphasis spring from a difference in fundamental premises. Nationalists are whole-hearted decentralists because the fundamental reality for them is not the efficiency or the power or the glory of the State, but the human person. His well-being

depends at least as much upon the quality of life in his society as upon its material standards. Apart from the manifold societies to which he belongs in maturity, there are two into which he is born, the family and the nation. These have an importance in the ordering of human life which cannot be exaggerated. The late Archbishop Temple stated the matter in this way :

"The family is so deeply grounded in nature and the nation in history that anyone who believes in God as Creator and as Providence is bound to regard both as part of the divine plan for human life. . . . Any ordering of society which impairs or destroys the stability of the family stands condemned on that account alone ; and any ordering of international life which obliterates the freedom of the several nations to develop their own cultural traditions is also condemned. The aim within the nation must be to create a harmony of stable and economically secure family units ; the aim in the world as a whole must be to create a harmony of spiritually independent nations which recognise one another as reciprocally supplementary parts of a rich harmonious fellowship."

This expresses clearly the attitude of Welsh nationalists.

There are therefore two aspects to the importance of national community. One is the contribution which its rich pattern of life makes to the individual person. The other is its contribution to human civilisation. The language and culture, the institutions, traditions and history of the nations are the foundation of European civilisation, the hope and stay of democracy and the most powerful ally of the Christian Church. Let the national life of Wales be destroyed, as it is to-day being destroyed, and the loss will be felt not only by Welshmen ; one of the springs which quicken civilisation, democracy and Christendom will have dried.

The great French socialist, Jean Jaurès, spoke no more than the truth when he said : "Destroy the nation, and you will sink back into barbarism." For the nations is to-day our greatest medium for the transmission of human values from generation to generation. When it disintegrates community becomes a rootless mass, unresisting before the onrush of the barbarism of Hollywood.

No man wrote with more insight into the power and function of nationality than Jean Jaurès. His thought has a powerful contemporary challenge for us.

"Nations are organic unities," he said, "and some of the characteristics of the nation are so deeply imprinted upon individuals that the destruction of the nation would be the destruction of individualism. If France were to be violated tomorrow and arrested in her development ; if she were no longer to be able to give expression to the inherent nature of her genius ; if she were unable to transmit to her sons the treasures of her language and literature . . . then there would not only be the oppression or dispersion of a great collective existence, there would be a diminution of vitality, a psychological impoverishment, an intellectual decline and an organic suffering in individuals—in all the individuals who participated in that collective existence and who found in it the substance and exaltation of their lives. And the French working class would suffer just as cruelly, just as deeply as every other class. It would even lose more than any other class, for it would lose a decisive means of emancipation. Even if the conquering nations were to institute Communism in the conquered country, even if it were to abolish capitalist tyranny, it would mean for the working class, thus liberated and violated at the same time, an intolerable suffering, feeling itself enslaved in the very nature of its apparent economic victory and unable to taste under the new order of justice the liberty and joy of its own genius. Therefore everything which tends to-day to weaken

the autonomy of nations, their historic originality and their spontaneous development, will compromise the organic nature of the great unity, the great unity of humanity which is to come. It must be in the form of a free federation of autonomous and fraternal nations that humanity will achieve true unity of life. And if the workers have no country, as the Communist Manifesto summarily asserts, then the workers have no share in humanity."

When will our generation of state-socialists, who have forgotten how to think as Welshmen, recapture the vision which inspired and ennobled the work of Jean Jaurès and Keir Hardie? Jaurès knew as well as any that nationality, which could be such a power for good, could also be a power for evil if its dynamic were misdirected. Misguided it can be, but this is no more reason for vilifying it than are the evils to which marriage sometimes gives rise a good reason for vilifying and abandoning the institution of marriage. Nationality is in any case a fact; it cannot be ignored or wished away. It has conferred immense benefits on men, but we must always be vigilant lest it be abused. The nation exists for man, not man for the nation. There is a moral law above all nations and all States. "The people who try to make the nation into some monstrous idol that has a right to the sacrifice of the innocent," said Jaurès, "are working for its destruction." It is in the highest degree improbable that this can happen in a small community like Wales. The temptation is strongest in the great nations which glory in their military power. It is they who sing "Deutschland Uber Alles," or—

"Wider still, yet wider, may thy bounds be set;
God who made thee mighty, make thee mightier yet."

That is the kind of disease to which society is susceptible. National communities are the cells which compose the body of humanity. If there is ill-health in the cells, mankind suffers. The organic relationship which exists

between the person and the nation persists between the nation and the greater society. "Nations," said Mazzini, "are the workshops of mankind." Their position is central. Only upon a healthy national life can a stable and enduring international order be based. The nation is the fundamental reality here just as the individual person is inside the national community. Respect for the rights of nationality is a condition of attaining a just and peaceful world order. It has been well said that the Great Powers will not be secure until the small nations are secure. The measure of security and freedom the latter enjoy is a fair test of the pretensions of the architects of international order.

An organic conception of society implies, therefore, that the nation must be an organism in its own right. This is at odds with the centralist policy of the day, which is the fruit of a mechanical conception which regards society as material which can be cut and planned as a tailor cuts and plans a suit of clothes. But it corresponds to the needs of the time, which demand, together with an ever closer international co-operation, the utmost possible decentralisation. Modern technical developments are bringing this about to some extent whether we wish it or not, by making possible the balanced development, not only of national territories, but even of smaller regions, "each a separate organic body with an independently-functioning heart." A more intimate and fruitful co-operation is possible between such decentralised, balanced communities than between huge, centralised power-blocs.

Many evils crowd upon the heels of centralism; the dangers of totalitarianism and militarism are never far away. These may incline the ears of men, otherwise unsympathetic, to heed the case for responsible nationalism presented by Plaid Cymru.

It follows from what has been said that if one's first concern in politics is the welfare of the individual person—the whole person—one will attach great importance to the richness and the stability of social life. One will

recognise that there is nothing more vicious in the modern power-state than its uprooting of men and women from their society, from their nation, their neighbourhood, their language and culture, traditions and history. Wales has suffered far more than her share of this. Community is the fruit of slow growth. The community of Wales has been centuries, millennia, in the making, though it can be destroyed in a generation. The State exists to protect and foster community, and its actions should always be governed by this concern. Even the warmest advocates of English Government could not maintain that its actions are motivated by such a concern for Wales. Indeed, it sometimes appears so brutally unconcerned for the effects of its actions on the life of Wales that it lays itself open to the suspicion that it would not regret the disintegration of the Welsh nation.

Even were the English Government, in all its measures, to show an anxious concern for the welfare of the Welsh nation, the case for self-government would remain, for, in Campbell-Bannerman's phrase, "Good government is no substitute for self-government." But in fact it usually ignores the existence of the Welsh nation, with dire consequences to Wales.

It may be said that Welshmen as individuals are as free as Englishmen. But they are not merely individuals; they are persons, members of a society, the Welsh nation, which is not free. Since person and nation are bound to each other in an organic whole, the unfreedom of the nation is reflected in the lives of its members. Welshmen cannot be as free as Englishmen until the Welsh nation is as free as the English nation. Freedom for Wales means freedom to realise her possibilities as a Welsh community; freedom for the Welshman means freedom to realise his possibilities as a Welshman in a free Welsh society. Freedom for the nation is a condition of freedom for the individual person.

III.—WHAT IS HAPPENING TO WALES.

THE forces which are destroying Wales to-day are far the most formidable combination known to her long history. It was a sufficient task for her to adjust herself to the tremendous changes which followed the industrial revolution and the development of the machine. These alone were enough to change the mode of living in most of the country, and their coming saw the disappearance of much of the stable traditional life in which, for the majority, the parish was the world. One important consequence of the new industrialism was the growth, re-distribution and change of population. The population of Wales in the Nineteenth Century was quadrupled; it was gathered in great urban agglomerations; and it was changed by the influx of large numbers of English people. By 1911, almost a sixth of the population was of English birth; there were 388,238 English people living in Wales in a population of 2,420,921. To-day, the majority of these immigrants, or their descendants, are proud to call themselves Welshmen; and since common membership of the Welsh community rather than language or descent is the test of nationality in Wales, nationalists are proud to know them as fellow-Welshmen. Wales has no finer patriots than some who have no knowledge of the national tongue, whereas many who speak the language think they thereby fulfil their duty to Wales; Welshmen who "hide behind the language" are unfortunately a common phenomenon in our land.

The extent of immigration inevitably weakened the position of the language in the industrial areas, and did so the more easily because Welsh speech was already receding in some of the parts most affected. At the same time the potent influence of the educational system made for the anglicisation of the younger generation, while the power of the nonconformist chapels, which had been the backbone of the life and language of Wales during the

Nineteenth Century was slowly waning. The first world war and conscription shook an already weakened community to its roots. Then came the immense development of the popular press, wireless broadcasting, and, most powerful of all these makers of the mass-mind, the cinema. Above all, the power of the State increased so greatly that no corner of the land and no person was immune from its influence.

These great forces struck a country which lacked the institutions of a free nation. Were Wales strong, healthy and free, each development could have enriched her life. But she was already weakened, and the State which should have been her strongest defence was the most powerful of the destructive agencies. The growth of this great Leviathan has been so phenomenal that its surest way of destroying Wales is to ignore her existence.

Countries smaller than Wales have their universities and schools which are truly national in language and learning, their own broadcasting corporations, their national theatre and opera, and even their own cinema. Wales is expected to survive without these necessities. Her language is denied even the dignity of official status in her own territory. Although no nation has ever succeeded in doing so, Wales is expected to maintain and revive her language and life by purely cultural movements. There are many examples in Europe of nations saving their national language from disappearance when faced with extinction, and re-establishing it as the language of their country; but without exception their success accompanied a political effort to achieve full nationhood which stirred the nation to its depths. Since the life of a national community is an organic unity it is vain to imagine that its cultural life can be preserved healthy and intact in a compartment separate from the other aspects of its life.

The extent of the disintegration in national life can be measured by the recession of the language. The following percentages of Welsh speakers were given in the Census of 1901, which was after all in the 20th and not the 15th Century :—

Brecknock R.D....	62 %	Builth R.D. ...	58½ %
Crickhowell ...	22 %	Ystradfellte ...	85 %
Llanidloes ...	55½ %	Llanfyllin ...	78½ %
Carmarthen ...	80 %	Kidwelly ...	93 %
Llandeilo ...	87½ %	Llandovery ...	84 %
Llanelli ...	82 %	Bangor ...	80 %
Conway ...	80 %	Llandudno ...	50 %
Hollywell ...	70 %	Prestatyn ...	62 %
Mold ...	57 %	Rhyl ...	50½ %
Llangollen ...	71 %	Ruthin ...	84½ %
Aberdare ...	71 %	Maesteg ...	72 %
Merthyr Tydfil ...	57½ %	Margam ...	62 %
Rhondda ...	64½ %	Gelligaer R.D. ...	57½ %
Neath R.D. ...	75 %	Bedwelty ...	35 %
Tredegar ...	28½ %	Rhymney ...	69 %

A comparison of the position revealed by these figures with the number of children in these districts who to-day speak Welsh—the only fair comparison—will show a catastrophic decline. In the Rhondda, for instance, not one child in a hundred speaks the language. No county in Wales has escaped the process of anglicisation unscathed, but in some areas, including the most populous, its ravages have been furious. Glamorgan had 344,892 Welsh speakers in 1901, being an *increase* of 28,821 over 1891. It was said at the end of the 19th Century that two-thirds of the members of the Monmouthshire County Council were Welsh-speaking, and when Lord Tredegar was appointed Vice-Chairman of the Council he was proposed and seconded in Welsh. Taking Wales as a whole, the majority of the people spoke Welsh, and the number of Welsh speakers showed an actual increase of 3% over 1891. These simple facts show how great the deterioration has been since then.

The language of Wales is her greatest treasure. "A people without a language of its own," said Thomas Davis, "is only half a nation. A nation should guard its

language more than its territories—'tis a surer barrier, and more important frontier than fortress or river. . . . To lose your native tongue, and learn that of an alien, is the worst badge of conquest—it is the chain on the soul. To have lost entirely the national language is death; the fetter has worn through." Bitter experience in Wales has taught us how true that is. We know well the spiritual decay and impoverishment that follows the decay and loss of the language, and the stimulus that follows its recapture. Language is so much more than a medium of expression; more than any other factor it unites the generations, cements the national community, and gives it its distinct character. Where the language of Wales is spoken the Welsh way of life is a more living reality than in the parts it has left, and as long as it is spoken there exists a vehicle designed to express the genius of the land.

There are those who despair of the future of the language. They are not to be found among the nationalists, who know that the Welsh tongue can again become the language of Wales for all purposes. Its position has deteriorated, but not beyond recovery. When Welshmen have learnt to think and live as Welshmen the day will not be far distant when their national language will be spoken through the length and breadth of Wales. It will then be unthinkable for them to rear their children without a full knowledge of the language of their country. They will insist on their education making them fully heirs of the great heritage of their nation. How are they to be stirred to think and act as Welshmen? By striving together in a mighty effort to achieve full nationhood and to build in Wales a free community which will contribute richly to the common treasury because it is true to itself.

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When we turn our attention to the economic and political aspects of Welsh life we discover a situation which must infuriate one who cares for justice. The London Government inherited in Wales a land of rich

natural resources which could have been, with reasonably good government, the homeland of one of the most fortunate nations in the world. During the last generation, however, this richly blessed land has been one of the world's unhappiest and worst governed, notorious for its unemployment and misery, for the squandering of its material wealth and the callous draining of its youth, by the hundred thousand, away from its villages and towns. While other smaller and poorer nations were making with increasing success a valiant effort to build prosperous national economies, each year saw Wales more miserable and more demoralised. Defenders of English Government have sought to attribute this solely to an economic depression which was world-wide in its effects. This is far too facile an explanation. No one will deny that the depression was the immediate cause, but why should its impact on Wales cause so much more havoc than in other countries? The answer is to be found in chronic condition of ill-health in Wales herself. Her spiritual, political and economic weakness was such that a virulent depression could not fail to prostrate her. Incapable of acting as a nation, she had been kept, as colonial territories are, dependent upon a few extractive industries, utterly at the mercy of events outside her control, with no power of initiative, and no power of adapting herself, as free communities can do, to changed conditions. She had so far forgotten how to act for herself politically and economically that she could do no more than send men to crawl the corridors of Whitehall with pathetic pleas to their governors to remember her wretchedness. The misery that drives nations to rebellion made her cringe like a frightened cur, and the one act of heroism that illuminated the scene at Penyberth, in September, 1936, showed how deep the shadows were. In one respect the Government was only too ready to oblige. If there was no work for the people in Wales, it would move the people from Wales. The trains from Wales were crammed with emigrants, the greater number of them under thirty years of age, products of the Schools and Churches of every part of our land, five hundred thousand of them, making

for Birmingham and Coventry and Slough and Dagenham, and all the other flourishing industrial centres in the Midlands and South of England, where the factories were. If it had been designed deliberately for the destruction of Wales this policy of transference could not have been more effective. It was in no way inevitable. Had Wales retained the power to act as a nation, and had she the institutions of a free nation, she would never have known the paralysing misery which all but destroyed her. As it was, she starved like the blind horse, knee deep in a field of corn.

Through those dark years governments rose and fell, but the misery in Wales went on. There was a Labour Government in 1924, followed by a Conservative Government; another Labour Government in 1929, and a Coalition Government in 1931. It made no difference to Wales. They were all English Governments.

The Irish saying about the famine of 1845 is apposite in this context. "Providence," they say, "sent the potato blight but England made the famine." So in Wales, it was the unholy alliance between economic depression and misgovernment which made the havoc.

Nationalists have been criticised for being too agitated by the degree of unemployment in Wales. "It was just as bad in Jarrow"—so the usual counter argument goes. Certainly it was as bad in Jarrow. But if the English Government allows an English town to get into that state, it does not justify or excuse its neglect of Wales. In Wales there were a score of Jarrowes. Ours was not a case of intense unemployment in one or two depressed pockets. The whole of Wales was depressed. The Counties which in 1935, in the depth of the depression, showed the heaviest unemployment were Brecon and Anglesey, with 50.7% and 45.7% of their insured workers unemployed respectively; 37.7% were unemployed in Cardiganshire.

The rural parts, which are the backbone of the Welsh way of life, lost a bigger proportion of their population than the industrial areas. The exodus had indeed been

unbroken throughout the previous half century, and its effects were so severe that, despite their high birth-rate, five Welsh rural Counties (Pembroke, Cardigan, Radnor, Merioneth and Montgomery) showed absolute decreases in population between 1871 and 1921, while nearly every English County showed a positive increase. Between the wars the exodus continued unabated. The number of farm-workers declined by nearly a third in fifteen years, between 1921 and 1936 from 68,139 to 47,763. The effect of this economic recession on the strength and prospects of the language and culture of Wales, which are strongest in the Welsh-speaking rural areas, is too obvious to need emphasis. Decades of a vigorous agricultural policy framed to suit Welsh conditions will be required to repair the injury which has been done.

The same period saw the unchecked decline of one of the very few industries in rural Wales. The woollen industry, which is based on the natural resources of the country, has now almost reached the point of extinction. During the 1930's alone the number of woollen textile factories in Wales was halved. By 1939 no more than 500 persons were employed in the whole industry, and of the 77 factories that remained, two-thirds employed less than five persons each. To-day the end of the industry is being hastened by means of a 66 2/3 % purchase tax on some of its most important products.

In 1913 the coal industry employed 249,082 persons; by 1937 the number had fallen by 41% to 146,172, and by 1948 to 125,370. So too in the iron, steel and tinplate industries. The share of South Wales in the total British steel output "fell sharply almost without a break" during the fifteen years preceding the second world war, and in 1938 unemployment in the tinplate industry was as high as 53%. During the 1939-45 war the future of the industry was mortally endangered by the Government's policy of closing Welsh tin works and removing the workers to England, and of transferring the Welsh tin markets to the U.S.A. under the Lend-lease agreements. Since the tinplate industry is a most important customer of the

Welsh coal, iron and steel industries, they too have been adversely affected by its vicissitudes. Similarly, the Government's war-time policy of closing Welsh slate quarries and transferring the workers to England reduced employment in the slate industry from 8,340 in 1938 to 5,000 in 1944.

As the major industries declined so, inevitably, did the minor and ancillary industries which make up the complex structure of modern community life, such as building, shop-keeping, catering and transport. By 1936, for example, three out of every four workers in the building trade were unemployed as against two out of four for the United Kingdom as a whole.

The Government intensified the economic distress not only negatively through its indifference and neglect, but positively through the adoption of policies which, while sometimes beneficial to English areas, were directly injurious to the interests of Wales. There is no more striking example of this than the history of the Welsh coal industry during these years, much of which is given in the Report of the Welsh Reconstruction Advisory Council. Among the succession of Government acts contributing to its ruin were the substitution of oil for coal in the Navy; the trade agreements such as those of 1933 and 1934 with the Scandinavian and Baltic countries, which benefited English coalfields at the expense of Wales; the premature return to the Gold Standard in 1925; the discrimination against steam wagons in the Road Traffic Acts of 1930 and 1934; the "economic wars" with Ireland and Italy which shut Welsh coal out of its traditional markets. The position was further worsened during the last war by the Government's policy of limiting the number of miners to be employed in Wales and transferring Welsh miners to the Midlands of England.

In twenty years the economic depression and Government action and inaction between them produced in Wales a state of affairs which will always be remembered with shame. It lasted, as the Reconstruction Committee's

Report says, "substantially unrelieved" until well into the war. Scarcely anything mitigates the grimness of the picture. Even the Treforest Trading Estate was little more than a piece of window-dressing, giving employment to a thousand persons, less than were thrown out of employment by the closing of the Cymmer Colliery. The history of that generation is the most eloquent testimony to the need of self-government for our nation.

Under the leadership of Mr. Saunders Lewis, Plaid Cynaru in those years urged, with all its slender resources, a policy of self-help, of co-operation among the local authorities, of the creation of secondary industries manufacturing in the first place for the home market. Its policy found support in unexpected quarters. The Government appointed Mr. Malcolm Stewart as Commissioner for Special Areas, and in his report, he said: "I can see but one way out, and that is to create a local demand for local production. . . . The foundation of the proposal lies in the fact that these areas still have a considerable population with a powerful spending power. They have in their own hands a lever which can be applied to create a market for locally produced goods. . . . In these areas there is too little of the spirit of self-reliance and effort, and too much tendency to consider that the future of the areas is a matter for the Government."

Unfortunately these fine words were not followed by action, and the Reconstruction Council felt obliged to express its criticism in no uncertain terms of "the inadequacy of authority and timidity of action that characterised the office of "Commissioner for Special Areas." Were nationality in Wales vigorous and healthy, there would have been a great response to the nationalist effort to arouse the "spirit of self-reliance and effort" for which Malcom Stewart pleaded, but the period marks the nadir of Welsh nationhood.

The Report of the Advisory Reconstruction Council, which had declared bluntly that much of the bitter experience of Wales must be attributed to "deliberate acts of State policy," gave some hope that the position

of Wales would be so improved after the war that a recurrence of the agony of the inter-war years would be unthinkable. It assumed that the Government "would act upon the principle of decentralisation and devolve very large powers upon regional bodies." "Only thus," it said, "can be avoided the past difficulties of administration by persons well intentioned and well qualified but wholly out of touch with the daily life and problems of Wales and with its resources and potentialities." This new Welsh regional economic planning authority, said the Report, "must be organised along lines that are at once flexible and powerful." It must be allowed "in very large measure to decide its own destiny," and finally, in its plan for Wales, "It must treat the Welsh Region as a whole." Later, as we shall see, the new English Government rejected summarily the whole thought underlying Advisory Committee's Report, and Welsh Parliamentary representatives were too tied to their English Parties to make a fight for it. It was a time of optimism. Even cautious Labour leaders, such as Mr. H. T. Edwards, came out at this time with fiery calls for a Welsh Parliament and a separation from the English Labour Party. Woe to those whose hopes were raised. Within two years a new Labour Government had relegated the Advisory Committee's Report to a dusty shelf, and made it clear that it would not allow Wales to be developed as an economic entity. Within two more years Mr. H. T. Edwards had forgotten the trumpet calls of 1944, and suffered himself to be elevated to the chair of yet another Advisory Committee.

After the war fortune so far favoured the new English Government that its refusal to undertake a radical reconstruction of Welsh economic life bore no ill consequences comparable in extent to those which afflicted Wales before the war. With both a flourishing seller's market and American aid to assist it, there was no difficulty in maintaining full employment. But even in this post-war boom, Wales has not known what it is to be without unemployment. Throughout this period the percentage of workless in Wales has been four times as heavy as in England.

Nevertheless, there has been an unaccustomed measure of prosperity which has deceived many into thinking that the Welsh economic problem is solved, and that, to Mr. James Griffiths and many of his fellow-socialists, that is equivalent to a complete solution of all the problems facing Wales. Plaid Cymru has tried to hammer home the truth of the position, that the improvement is but temporary, that the boom is bound to break, and that, despite the veneer of new light industries, no radical structural improvement has been made in Welsh economy which will enable Wales to ride the storm ahead. Our vessel is facing a perilous voyage, and is as unsafe as the notorious coffin-ships of a bygone age.

Nothing has been done to ensure that the terrible experience of the inter-war years will not be suffered again in Wales. What has happened once can happen again, and it will happen again unless we act decisively as a nation. Wales remains to-day as vulnerable in the face of the gathering storm as she was in 1923. It could be pleaded in extenuation of those then in authority that they had no idea of what lay ahead of them. There can be no such excuse for us. We have been through it once, and the storm signals are already up. The attitude of the present Government is to refuse to allow Wales to be governed as an entity, to deny her all power of initiative, to withhold from her all national responsibility. The people of Wales must make it clear to the Government that if it persists in this attitude it is keeping from them their only chance of survival. It is condemning a nation to death.

The London Government may be acting in ignorance of the effects of its policy on Wales. It has its Welsh advisers, but we know how thoroughly assimilated they have been by English thought and society. They naturally approach all problems, including those of Wales, from the English standpoint. We must demand that the future of Wales be considered from the Welsh point of view. Once we do that we are compelled to the conclusion that self-government for Wales is not only a moral right but an economic necessity.

Welsh nationalists, because they think as Welshmen, are sometimes called anti-English. That is an entirely wrong judgement. They are pro-Welsh, and, since Wales is a part of England, they have inevitably much that is severely critical to say of English Government in its relation to Wales, but they are inspired by no animosity towards the English people, with whom they desire to live, and must live, in cordial friendship. There will be no lessening of friendly intercourse between the two peoples when Wales is free; they must always be interdependent. The Danes stood in a not dissimilar relationship to Germany in the last century, and the words of their great leader, Grundtvig, are apposite in our position to-day:

"When we Danes strive to make ourselves as independent of Germany as possible, it is not in order to avoid all dependence, but only that dependence which experience has shown cannot be reconciled with our independent existence and natural development."

The continued "independent existence" of the Welsh nation depends, as does her natural development, upon the institution of a Welsh Parliament. By making active co-operation between Wales and England and other nations a possibility, this will foster a healthy interdependence.

A closer look at the contemporary situation will help us. We see in Wales a small country to which nature at least has been kind, endowing her with resources which should be adequate to maintain her people at a reasonable standard of life. A beautiful country—no small advantage this—she is well placed geographically, with a long coastline and good ports which enable her to make the most of this advantage. Her climate is equable, neither freezing her coasts by winter nor burning her fields by summer. Her people are active and intelligent, and have a great reservoir of power in their long national history and rich culture. She has varied agricultural resources, which have yet to be developed, plentiful water supplies and rich

mineral deposits. Few comparable territories in the world have such natural wealth and are so well placed to develop it. What would Denmark not have made of the resources of Wales if she could have exchanged them for the natural poverty of her own land, which has been described as a country "practically devoid of natural riches." Wales is far richer in natural resources than many small countries whose accomplishments to-day put her to shame.

It is the misfortune of Wales that no full and balanced development of her resources has ever been attempted. Agriculture, which should be the foundation of her economy, provides work for only 9% of her population, and the schemes of development evolved by Sir George Stapledon and his colleagues, still wait to be implemented. The number employed in the coal, iron and steel industries is still high—as many as 35% of the insured workers. But we are being warned that "coal no longer sells itself"; many traditional markets have been lost, and the ports as well as the collieries of South Wales will be increasingly affected by the turn-over of ships from coal to oil. This is the time chosen by the N.C.B. to pursue a policy of pit closure which may bring ruin to many neighbourhoods. Of really constructive development we hear little. Wales should now be the home of a growing host of secondary and by-product industries based upon coal. It is a grave disservice to Wales to turn a deaf ear to the Reconstruction Committee's plea for a new attitude towards coal in Wales as a raw material which offers tremendous scope for the production of oil and plastics and a hundred other products. Were coal regarded in this way, it would not be necessary to destroy the beauty of Welsh mountain scenery for the production of electricity. If a quarter of a million tons of coal annually will produce the electricity that all the hydro-electric schemes in North Wales can produce, surely it is to be preferred, not only as safeguarding the natural beauty of the North, but also as providing the kind of steady market for our coal which is most to be desired.

The future of the steel industry is even more problematic. An executive with forty years experience in the industry recently wrote: "The steel industry in West Wales is heading for the worst catastrophe in its long history. Unless steps are taken without delay the steelworkers of West Wales face a period in which mass unemployment and emigration will be inevitable. . . . Margam and its subsidiary cold reduction plant will employ about 5,000, as against the 35,000 in the outdated plants of West Wales. This eventually means the scrap-heap or short-time employment for 30,000 of the world's finest steelworkers and for thousands indirectly dependent upon the steel industry. It is an ugly prospect." He calls for four new or remodelled steel-producing plants in areas "affected by the transfer of capacity to Margam." Where are the markets to be found? Here his advice strikes the note that needs to be heard. "It is too often suggested," he says, "that Wales is too far removed from existing consumer markets. But *there is no valid reason why such markets should not be established in the Principality.* On this account the blue print for West Wales should provide for a sizeable car, lorry and tractor works, other concerns for the production of cycles and motor-cycles, of farming implements, of railway carriages and locomotives at various West Wales centres." That is surely the direction in which we should move. Our need, which the new light industries have scarcely touched, is still for the development of a variety of secondary industries which shall make use of the materials Wales can supply, and which shall cater not only for the export market but also for home consumption.

The Government's promises of light industries have been given great publicity, but even its supporters confess that the actual achievement has been bitterly disappointing. According to Mr. H. Dawes, Controller for Wales of the Board of Trade, these factories were to employ 152,760 workers, and in June, 1949, he claimed that 50% of this total had been absorbed by the end of 1948. Reports from districts, however, reveal a static or deteriorating position. Whatever the prospects may be

"on paper," many new factories are closing or working below capacity. One of the main factors holding up production is shortage of raw materials. Few of the factories for disabled miners have been in production at all, and even if they were in full production they would touch only the fringe of the great problem of silicosis and pneumoconiosis. In many of the new factories the majority of persons employed are women—60% of the two thousand workers on the Hirwaun Trading Estate, for example. But their outstanding characteristic is their instability. Most of them are subsidiaries of English firms; they are largely employed in producing luxury goods; and their products are designed chiefly for an unstable foreign market. With the first onset of depression these will be the first concerns in Britain to close down. We would indeed be deluding ourselves if we thought they had abolished the danger of large-scale unemployment in Wales. Paraded as conclusive evidence of the Government's far-sighted concern for the welfare of Wales, they will soon be empty mockeries of a policy which took the easiest way out. The plain fact is that as a solution of the Welsh economic problem they are a pathetic failure.

Welsh economy is thus a jerry-built structure ready to collapse in the first storm. Yet in May, Mr. Dawes could declare that "we have no really serious problems apart from a few factories which still have to be let." If Welshmen allow themselves to be deceived by such blind or irresponsible optimism, then the situation is indeed one for despair.

Do we really realise how transient is the post-war boom? Are we in truth aware of the probable effects on our economy of the adjustment to a world which is no longer a paradise for the salesmen of Britain? Do we believe honestly that the economy of Wales is sturdy enough to withstand the shocks that are to come? Do we think that the coal, steel and tinplate industries, the quarries, the ports, the new light industries, the ancillary industries and the huge army of minor bureaucrats—do we think these can be maintained in Wales

under her present form of government, at the 1949 level of employment? If we do, we are indeed living in a fool's paradise, and nothing will be done to prevent our drifting complacently into a period which may be of unprecedented unemployment and may encompass Wales in final ruin.

Precious months are slipping by without any effective action being taken to build a stable Welsh economy. Nor is anything effective likely to be done as long as Wales is an integral part of England and is unable to act as a community. It is vain to hope that the English Government will formulate and pursue in Wales a truly Welsh policy, governed by the needs of the Welsh nation. Would that Wales would wake up and realise that she will go under because she does not count. She is but an appendage of England, and an unimportant one at that. When the Government thinks of "the country" or "the nation" it thinks of England. The needs that govern its actions are English needs, not Welsh. And the crisis which is now threatening the existence of Wales is in its essence an English crisis from which a self-governing Wales would have escaped. The building up of a balanced economy which would not be utterly at the mercy of outside events would be possible in a self-governing Wales, because of the advantage which her economic resources give her. This advantage is lost to a Wales which is an undifferentiated part of England. In economic policy Wales must be treated as a national entity, which requires at least a measure of self-government. The minimum immediate requirement is a Welsh Parliament with control over Welsh affairs. There can be no solution to the Welsh problem which does not make this the first desideratum. A Welsh Parliament is not a luxury to be won in some untroubled future; it is Wales' most urgent need to-day in her extremity. A Parliament for Wales is now the condition, not only of maintaining a reasonable standard of living, but of national survival.

A brief consideration of the predicament in which the United Kingdom finds itself will confirm this contention. The advantage gained by its flying start in the industrial

revolution has now been almost exhausted. Whereas it has long been accustomed to dictating its own terms of trade, it now finds itself hard pressed by the competition of countries in all parts of the world. These were once its markets for goods which their feverish industrialisation during recent years now enables them to produce for themselves and even to export. Their competition is not confined to markets but extends to raw materials which were once British monopolies. At this juncture Britain finds herself stripped of her foreign investments, and her predominance in shipping and world banking supplanted. No longer the workshop of the world, she has to strain herself to expand exports by 75% over the 1938 level to maintain her position. Yet hers cannot be called a struggle for survival. Her effort is to maintain her standard of living, her population, and, above all, her position as a Great Power. Nothing increases the difficulty of these objectives for a people dependent upon foreign food more than the growing cost of food, which is unlikely to become less costly or more plentiful in the foreseeable future. Since almost 50% of British imports are of food, the vital importance of this item cannot be over-estimated. The cost of food and other imported raw materials has been increasing more rapidly than have export prices, so that an increase of 75% over the volume of 1938 exports is not enough to recover even the 1938 standard of living. In fact the mounting competition from other countries gives Britain an ever-decreasing share of world trade, and as this competition is bound to intensify, especially from America, Germany and Japan, nothing short of a miracle will enable Britain to hit the target of a 75% increase. Moreover, her need is not to increase her exports indiscriminately, but to sell them to the countries which can supply the raw materials she so urgently needs. It is her failure to sell enough to the hard currency areas that is the most dramatic aspect of her predicament. The most startling symbol was the dollar deficit of £157,000,000 for the second quarter of 1949.

British competitive power is depressed by the rigidity of her disproportionately high production costs. A major cause of this has been the failure to give the workers an

effective incentive. The Government had expected much from the nationalised industries and services, but the bureaucratic form of nationalisation adopted has done nothing to increase the sense of responsibility among the workers concerned, because they have in fact no greater share of responsibility and ownership than they had under the old order.

But "the biggest item in national costs," as *The Economist* points out, "is the burden of taxation." Taxation has now reached a point unprecedented in any country, absorbing over 40% of the "national" income. And out of a total State expenditure of £3,308,368,000 for the current year, the National Debt (incurred to finance past wars) takes £485,000,000 (plus £29,000,000 for interest "met from receipts under various Acts authorising such application) and the "Defence" Services take £759,963,000. Thus well over a third of this year's State expenditure is for the wholly wasteful and unproductive purpose of paying for past and future wars—and this takes no account of the immense waste of productive man-power and money in the civilian industries which work to supply the armed forces, or of the dislocation of the whole economic life of the island by the Government's policy of conscription in peace-time. Nor is there under the present order any prospect of relief from this burden of taxation, since the English Parties of the Right and the Left are now militarist and imperialist. According to a statement made by the Chancellor on January 18th, 1949, the people of Britain were then paying £69 per head in taxation (£39 direct and £30 indirect). Assuming that the people of Wales pay as much as those of England, our two and a half millions are paying £170,000,000 per annum in taxation. An idea of the crushing weight of this burden will be given by a comparison with the Irish figure. In 1946-7 the whole budget of Eire, which has a population of three millions, was £53.9 millions, of which £48.2 millions were raised by taxation. (In 1935-6 it was £33.07 millions. The Finnish budget for the same year was £14.85 millions, and the Estonian £3.95 millions).

Without extraneous aid the British economy would collapse, but there is no doubt that the U.S.A. will continue to stand for some time again between Britain and bankruptcy, though, perhaps, allowing her "to go through the wringer." But it would be foolish to expect the British economy to be shored up indefinitely in this way. America's chief interest in Britain is, after all, as a base and bulwark against Russia. If America and Russia came to an understanding, American aid would end as abruptly as did Lend-lease at the end of the war, when Britain was counting on its continuance. Were it not for the antagonism between U.S.A. and Russia, British economy would have collapsed long before this. However terrible its consequences, economic collapse would not mean the extinction of the English nation; other nations, Germany for example have passed through such periods of economic breakdown and have survived. The English language and tradition would continue, and her separate nationhood maintained. In Wales, where generations of misgovernment have brought the nation to the verge of destruction, the situation is different. Here, there would be desperate hardship, and perhaps worse, for our people; but there might also be something that the people of England do not fear—the final disintegration of the nation.

Now is the time to construct a Welsh economy that can withstand the ordeal that is to come. This is our clear and imperative duty to our nation. He is not only a poor Welshman but a pitiable specimen of humanity, who, through apathy or prejudice, neglects this duty at this critical juncture in his nation's history. How does a nation act when fighting for her existence? That is the kind of action demanded of Welshmen to-day if we are not to fall below the level of history. Wales must have her Parliament around which Welshmen can rally. She would find that her import difficulties would be far less than England's. Since she has twice the acreage of land, and more livestock, per head of the population than England has, and is consequently less dependent on foreign food supplies, she would not have the same

difficulty in organising a self-supporting (not completely self-sufficient) economy. Even to-day Wales is a substantial exporter of livestock products, particularly of meat and milk. With the impetus given by national responsibility, these resources could be developed far more fully. Just as the national spirit sent young Jews into the desert lands of Palestine, which, through their labours, they made like a garden, so, one can imagine, it may send a new generation in a self-governing Wales out to develop fully our hill and marginal lands.

Furthermore, the Welsh economy has in all probability, even now a credit trade balance. Despite the fact that statistics for Wales are withheld from us, we are on firm ground in making this assumption when we consider the extent of Welsh exports in coal, steel, tinplate, slate, livestock, milk, apart from manufactured products and the value of the tourist industry. The significance of this is obvious. The role of the export trade has been perverted to-day under pressure of the fact that England imports so much more food and raw materials than she can pay for otherwise than by an unnatural expansion of exports. This is essentially an English problem, and it is a combination of the stark facts of this economic predicament and their determination to remain a Great Power, come what may, that binds the English Parties to an "export or die" policy. Had Wales control over her own economic policy she could avoid many of the worst consequences of the English predicament; she is drawn into the vortex as part of England. In addition, since her political policy as a small country would not require the crippling taxation levied in England, which, as we have seen, is a major cause of the present high costs, the prices of her products, if she had the power of the purse, would be more competitive.

The greatest advantage of all, even in the field of economics, which a Parliament for Wales would bring, would be its effect on the morale of the Welsh people. Fired with a new faith in the future of their ancient nation, invigorated by their freedom to act at last as

a people, and imbued with a determination to rebuild their land on the firm foundation of nationality, the people of Wales could save themselves by their exertions and help to save others by their example. They have the talent and the resources; they need only the courage to renounce their ignoble status, and to follow the vision of a self-respecting Wales free to work out her destiny in the community of nations.

Welsh patriotism is a power which has not yet been harnessed for the purposes of government. When it becomes possible to do so, the fact that Wales is a small nation will be found to be her greatest advantage. Small nations have a sense of belonging together that huge populations know only when threatened from the outside and this can make possible a greater measure of co-operation and responsibility. Nor is this the only advantage which smallness gives over hugeness in government. One of the reasons why Arthur Henderson was so strong an advocate of Welsh self-government was that, as he said, "All the problems that embarrass statesmen challenge the imagination of reformers, are to be seen in Wales reduced to manageable proportions." Problems facing a small country are naturally smaller in nature and numbers than those facing an imperial government. The Government of a small nation can therefore concentrate more effectively on its problems, and go into them in greater detail. Whereas the Westminster Parliament can give less than one day a year to Welsh problems, a Welsh Parliament and Government would give their whole time to their solution. Moreover, since they would be in far closer touch with the people of Wales than a London Government can ever be, Welsh democracy would become more real.

These have been the advantages which have given the Scandinavian countries the reputation of being the best-governed countries in the world. In his book on "The Smaller Democracies," Lord E. D. Simon inquires into the reasons for the success of the smallest European democracies, and emphasises in his conclusion "the comparative ease of managing a small population as against the difficult world-wide problems of a country like Great Britain."

The first reason he gives for their success is their small size. In discussing Sweden he observes that "She has no empire and her foreign policy is accordingly very simple. (Her) small population is a great advantage in simplifying the forms of government. The heads of the government can be in personal touch with the leaders of different sections in the national life in a way which is impossible in England. . . The tasks of government do not compare in scale, pace and complexity with those of Britain. The Prime Minister has plenty of time to think quietly over his problems : he has only a fraction of the responsibilities and the burdens of the British Prime Minister."

Similarly, the Report, quoted in "Can Wales Afford Self-Government?" of the Commercial Secretary to the English Legation at Copenhagen, on Denmark's economic position immediately before the 1939-45 war, says : *"If trade control can succeed at all, it is likely to do so in Denmark. The country is small, and its activities can be supervised at close quarters. It is also in many respects an ideal field for applied economic thought. It is practically devoid of natural riches, and if it is to play any important part in international commerce and industry (as it unquestionably does), this can only be accomplished by the exertion of thought, initiative and skill. The ground is favourable for the further reason that education, and an intelligent view of the value of method, permeate the entire population."* Franz Borkenau's conclusion in his "Socialism, National and International," is the same. *"The only Socialist and Labour Parties," he says, "which rose to the occasion of the great economic crisis and the coming of planned economy socialism were those of Scandinavia and New Zealand. They were countries with a strong trade union movement and were all small countries, not burdened with the major issues of international politics."*

Will Wales be able "to rise to the occasion" of the next great economic crisis? The answer depends upon her possessing some at least of the power which these small countries have. This is the challenge to the Welsh people to-day. Their survival as a nation depends upon their response.

IV.—WALES MUST BE FREE.

THERE is no solution for the Welsh problem which does not begin with the institution of a Welsh Parliament responsible to the people of Wales. Nothing less can satisfy national self-respect and nothing less can heal the economic ills which have multiplied so alarmingly under present legislative conditions.

The English Parties have been at some pains recently to avoid the issue of self-government, without forfeiting Welsh support, by including in their programmes measures of administrative devolution. The promise of a Secretary of State for Wales, in particular, has proved its value to some of them. If it satisfied the emotions of the Welsh, there was much to commend it to a section of English-political opinion, for it involved no transfer of responsibility from London to Wales. But nobody genuinely concerned with the Welsh problem could entertain it as a solution for a moment. Its impact on the life of Wales would be negligible. Were the office to be established to-morrow, not one more Welshman would be found work in Wales, not one more acre of marginal land would be developed, and the prospects of our language and culture would nowhere be improved. A new obstacle would have been erected which might delay for many years the advance of Wales in the direction that matters. There may have been a time when the office would have justified its existence by fostering the growth of a Welsh Civil Service and in securing separate statistics for Wales, but that time is past.

The appeal to the Scottish precedent, so often made in this connection, is a most unfortunate one for the supporters of the office. In Scotland it has been an almost unmitigated failure, and is almost invariably spoken of in contemptuous terms by members of all Parties. Of all the occupants of the office, the Right Hon. Thomas Johnston was alone able to use it to the manifest

benefit of Scotland, and he could find no better words to describe the Secretary than "a Poo Bah," "a bottleneck," "six ministers rolled into one." His conviction was expressed thus in 1948: "For years past I have been convinced that concurrently with the discussion of the political forms *it was essential that we should get economic control.*" That is the central weakness of the office of the State Secretary; it is a mere "political form" which takes the nation no nearer democratic self-government and which gives her no economic control.

In 1937, Mr. Attlee wrote an Introduction to a Socialist pamphlet entitled "Plan for Scotland," which stated that judging by its effects upon the life, work and health of the ordinary Scotsman, "this experiment in bureaucratic devolution without democratic responsibility" had been a wretched failure. "There are but two alternatives now," said the pamphlet, "either to sweep away the whole unsuccessful machinery of the State Secretaryship and its bureaucracy, and to incorporate Scotland for the first time in her history as an integral part of England—or to give her real democratic responsibility for Scottish affairs with a Parliament and Government in Edinburgh." This outright socialist condemnation of the Secretaryship did not prevent Welsh Labour candidates including it in their election programmes in 1945 as one of the things that Wales would be given "at once" by a Labour Government, but it helps one to understand why the Government, which could not afford to alienate Welsh opinion by doing nothing for Wales, adopted the even more pathetic expediency of an Advisory Council.

The one relieving feature in this episode of the establishment of the Welsh Advisory Council was that it deceived no one into thinking that it was anything other than a vote-catching expedient. This places it in the same category as the Tories' "watch-dog" in the Cabinet. The most powerful contention their advocates have been able to advance in their favour is that "they are better than nothing," which we take leave to doubt. From the Welsh point of view their mischief is incalculable, since they kill the appetite for national freedom; no doubt

that is part of their purpose. The Advisory Council came into existence early in 1948 to advise the Government on the effect of its measures in Wales, though, if the M.P.'s were doing their job, this function was already being fulfilled. The Council meets once a quarter in secret, care having been taken to exclude the press from its deliberations; an innocuous "hand-out" after the meeting is to suffice for publicity. There is therefore no danger of the Council giving a lead to Wales or in any way rousing Welsh opinion, and no danger of the public knowing whether its representations have been accepted, or, what is more likely, turned down by the Government. No secretariat prepares for the Council's deliberations, which thus have the light spontaneity of a debating society.

Wales has had a number of advisory committees, each one of which has added to the feeling of frustration in the country without contributing much of value to the practical solution of Welsh problems, which is of course no reflection on their membership or upon the value of their advice. The new one bears a striking resemblance to the Natives' Representation Council which has just been abolished in the Union of South Africa, and of which General Smuts is reported to have said that it was a failure "because it was merely advisory, and therefore nothing but a debating society." The institution of such a Council in Wales, for a country which is at least as well able to govern itself as its neighbour, is an affront to the Welsh nation which will not be quickly forgotten. Even the leading Socialist weekly, "The New Statesman and Nation," could find nothing better to say of it than that "This, surely, is trifling with the very real feeling among Welshmen that Wales should have a larger say in the democratic management of some, at least, of her own concerns."

The Conservative Party, in its Welsh policy, proposes to add to this irresponsible Committee a Minister for Wales who promises to be equally powerless, and who, if he should ever appear on the political scene, would be the

unhappiest of creatures, shuttled miserably from Department to Department in his endeavour to act for Wales in the unenviable role of "contact man." Should this proposal mature, which heaven forbid, the resulting union would be the oddest constitutional freak in Britain. The predicament of those who reject democratic self-government for Wales is hard indeed, when a major political Party is forced to meditate such an alternative.

There is no substitute for a genuine measure of self-government for Wales. Democratic self-government is not possible without a national Parliament. That is the first essential step. A Welsh Parliament, whatever its status, will make a real improvement in the prospects of the nation. The extent of the improvement will depend largely upon the extent of the powers with which it is endowed, the nature of the matters upon which it can legislate, and, in particular, the measure of its financial responsibility.

Plaid Cymru, in the conviction that at this time of desperate need in the history of our nation, Welshmen of all political persuasions must be prepared to co-operate in demanding that measure of self-government which can be immediately obtained, will loyally take its part in a united demand for a Parliament for Wales without making conditions concerning its powers and status. Although it may not be that the status of the Parliament for Wales upon which common agreement can now be found will fulfil the policy of Plaid Cymru, yet if it is secured within the next five years, Welsh nationalists will not be found wanting in co-operation.

This does not imply a change in the policy of the movement. Its policy is still the attainment of Commonwealth status for Wales, and it would continue to fight for it in a Welsh Parliament. But the fight would be a democratic one, and would not be won until the people of Wales had freely come to support its policy. There are sufficient reasons for believing that the Welsh nation will not be content with a status which gives her less than full freedom.

Freedom for Wales is the aim of Plaid Cymru. Freedom, not independence. In his address to the Party's first summer school, Mr. Saunders Lewis stated this principle, from which we have not departed. We do not demand independence for Wales, he said, "not because it is impracticable, but because it is not worth having. . . . It is a cruel and material thing, leading to violence and oppression and ideas that have been proved wrong. . . . We demand, therefore, not independence, but freedom. And the meaning of freedom in this matter is responsibility. We who are Welsh people claim that we are responsible for the civilisation and the ways of social life in our part of Europe."

It is because our objective is freedom, not independence, that we aim at the status of a dominion within the Commonwealth of Nations. Plaid Cymru has never stood for absolute sovereignty; its ambition is to see Wales a responsible member of the international community. The British Commonwealth knows of no status but Dominion or Commonwealth Status for its free member nations. There are varying degrees of devolution for communities still in tutelage, and of federalism for provinces, but, while they would be an advance on Wales' present condition of incorporation in England, they do not satisfy the legitimate aspirations or the needs of a self-respecting nation.

The status of Northern Ireland is an example. Some find it attractive as a possible status for Wales because the final authority remains in London, and because London has retained the power to legislate on matters of principle. For that reason it is not a status of freedom. Certain powers have been devolved on the Six Counties' Government, but they still remain a part of England. There are, of course, sufficient historical reasons for the very limited autonomy which they enjoy, springing from a situation that does not obtain in Wales. The most severe restrictions are placed on Northern Ireland's financial autonomy. Since as much as three-quarters of its income is outside its control, and as it may not tax

income or profit, nor levy customs and excise, its control over the State's social and economic circumstances is small. Even in matters over which it has legislative power, London has the right of veto. In practice, therefore, as Dr. Mansbergh points out in his authoritative work on Northern Ireland, the Stormont Government's powers are administrative. It is heavily subsidised from London, and if only for that reason the English Government would not wish to see its status with regard to financial and economic powers repeated in Wales.

In consequence of its devolutionary status, Northern Ireland continues to send representatives to Westminster. This is a matter of great importance for both sides in considering what status Wales and Scotland should have. In his "Framework of Home Rule," published in 1911, when Ireland was debating the question of national status, Erskine Childers noted three serious disadvantages involved in sending representatives to the London Government. Substituting Wales for Ireland, they are: (1) that it would be a bad thing for Wales to have to find two groups of representatives when she herself stood in so much need of her best men; (2) more serious still, it would tend to lessen the value of the measure of Welsh home rule by keeping alive old quarrels and bad political habits; (3) it would keep alive the habit of dependence upon England for financial help.

The disadvantages of double representation would not all be on the Welsh side. One cannot imagine its being welcomed in England, particularly if Scotland gains home rule as well. The matter raises no serious difficulties when Northern Ireland alone is concerned; her thirteen M.P.'s are unlikely to sway matters one way or the other in Westminster; but, add to them the Welsh and Scottish representatives and one can see the possibility of their combined vote being decisive. The situation would be unjust to the English people. For whereas the Scots and Welsh would have a voice in the control of English affairs in virtue of their Westminster representation, the English people would have no voice in Scottish and Welsh

affairs. It is extremely difficult to see a way out of this impasse. When it was faced in the case of Ireland, an attempt was made to distinguish between "imperial" matters that the Irish members could vote on, and English domestic matters upon which they should not vote, but it was found impossible to maintain the distinction. Yet the principle of no taxation without representation must govern. To deny Wales representation in the London Parliament while retaining for it the right to tax Wales is unthinkable. It may be found that the only practical solution of the dilemma is to give Wales financial and economic autonomy, so that it would be unnecessary for her to send members to the London Parliament.

Another possible solution which has been canvassed in some quarters, without a clear definition of what is intended, is federalism. Sometimes Northern Ireland is referred to as if it were an example of federalism. That is, of course, a misapprehension, for, as we have seen, the Six Counties Government is a clear example of devolution. It is of the essence of federalism that there are two co-ordinate governments, the central federal government and the local provincial government, and that these two governments in their several spheres are independent of each other and equal in status with each other. Their powers are different and are clearly defined, so that each can exercise its power without interference from the other. Neither is, therefore, subordinate to the other. As we saw, the Stormont Government is wholly subordinate to the London Government.

Federalism can be a most attractive form of government, and if there should ever be a federation of Europe, one may hope to see Wales a constituent unit. But it has certain definite limitations which would appear to make it an impracticable form for the countries of Britain. In particular, it requires that the constituent units be fairly equal in size and strength, or at least that there should be no one or two units which are bigger and stronger than a combination of the others. Were there

such a giant among them its influence would be so preponderant upon the federal government that the independent powers of the small States could not be maintained. "It is essential," said John Stuart Mill :

"that there should not be any one State so much more powerful than the others as to be capable of vying in strength with many of them combined. If there be such a one, and only one, it will insist on being master of the joint deliberations ; if there be two, they will be irresistible when they agree."

Amongst the countries of Britain there would be one such State. England is not only much bigger than Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland ; her population is almost five times as great as their combined populations. Federalism in Germany was destroyed by the preponderant power of Prussia. How much greater is the inequality in Britain than in Germany. Nothing could prevent England continuing "master of the joint deliberations." As K. C. Wheare says in his "Federal Government" :

"There must be some sort of reasonable balance which will ensure that all the units can maintain their independence within the sphere allotted to them, and that no one can dominate the others. It must be the task of those who frame and work a federal government to see that no unit shall be too large, and, equally important, none too small."

This essential condition is absent.

The limitations upon the freedom of a provincial unit in a federal State will not be discussed here—inability to take a place in the international community is an important example of them—but rather the difficulties of applying the federal solution to Britain. The flexible, unwritten constitution of England, which has for centuries been the pride of the land, would have to be scrapped, and supremacy given to a new written constitution. Since it is the constitution which defines the fields of the provincial and the federal governments, this

is unavoidable. The written constitution is supreme ; it must be followed to the letter, and heavy responsibility lies upon the Court of Appeal which has to interpret it.

Even harder to bear in England would be the change involved in the position of Parliament and government. Federalism requires a Parliament for each constituent unit and a Federal Parliament in addition. In England, therefore, there would be two Parliaments and two Governments, one pair for English affairs and the other for the federation. Unlike Commonwealth status for Wales, which requires no great change in the constitutional and political life of England, federalism involves England as fully as Wales in a major constitutional upheaval. Welsh federalists seem to assume lightheartedly that their policy can somehow be accomplished more easily than the institution of a Commonwealth Parliament in Wales. There appears to be little to justify this belief when one considers the immensity of the task of persuading the English people to abandon their traditional constitution for something different, and to support on her soil two Parliaments and two Governments, with all the duplication and confusion of bureaucracy, representation and elections which that would involve,—the one Parliament for the British Federation, with a population of 49 millions, and the other for England herself, with a population of 40 millions. To persuade them to make this change is certainly not a task to be undertaken by a Welsh Party.

No doubt there is a case for federalism in Britain, but the belief that it is in some sense "more practical" than the policy of Plaid Cymru is groundless. Most of its advantages could be gained, while avoiding its grave difficulties, by close co-operation between the governments of the four countries.

Federalism in Australia, which has not to contend with the discrepancy in size of the units that obtains in Britain, illustrates the difficulty of maintaining the autonomy of the provinces. In Australia, as in the other federal countries, heavy pressure is being brought to bear upon the State Governments to reduce their powers, with

serious effect in some cases upon their economic life. In consequence, Western Australia recently decided by referendum to establish itself as a separate State, but it has not yet succeeded in doing so. Behind this action lay a long succession of legal cases in which the High Court had interpreted the Constitution so favourably to the Federal Government that one of the first conditions of federalism,—the independence of the State legislature in its sphere—was imperilled. The Western Australian statement of its case declared :

"The working of the Constitution as proved by actual experience, together with the steady growth of the policy of centralisation adopted by successive Commonwealth Governments, has placed Western Australia in that unenviable position that, if it remains a party to the Federation it will ultimately cease to exist."

This tendency to whittle away States' rights is particularly important in the field of taxation. In Australia, both the States and the Federal Government had the right under the Constitution to levy income tax. A series of High Court decisions has by now, however, legalised a system which in effect restricts the right to levy income tax to the Federal Government. "The power to tax," said the great American Judge Marshall, "includes the power to destroy," and this is precisely what some Australian States fear. "The Federal Parliament," said Sir John Quick in discussing this trend in Australia, "could impose taxation in any shape or form, direct or indirect, to the monopoly of all resources of revenue, and to the eventual destruction of the States."

The insecurity of the States under federal government where it is to-day practised is not reassuring to those who would see the form applied to the more difficult circumstances of Britain. Professor K. C. Wheare goes as far as to say that to-day's prospect is that federal government will not survive for long anywhere if wars and economic crises are to recur frequently. "It may be doubted, for

example," he says, "whether the federal system in Australia could survive another war or another economic crisis."

It may, therefore, be that those who are now loathe to support Plaid Cymru's policy of full freedom, will be compelled to see that not only is this the only policy which would give Welshmen full responsibility for civilisation and social life in this part of Europe, but that it is also the only policy of autonomy which will prove to be practicable for the nations of this island. High claims have been made for the British Commonwealth of Nations as an instrument fashioned to reconcile national freedom with true international community and common endeavour. When so many nations are being introduced into this society of equals, Wales, too, a mother-country, must surely find her place there, where she would be once again a responsible member of international society. No devolution of a few powers and no provincial status will allow her to live her life and make her contribution. But she could realise her potentialities fully in this society of free nations, which are "in no way subordinate one to the other in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs." Having attained the status of freedom as a member of this community, she would no longer be a stranger to Europe. For as a free nation Wales could claim her place in the Council of Europe and in many other political and cultural international institutions.

V.—WORK TO BE DONE.

In these days of increasing centralisation in our country there may be little danger of man's physical welfare being forgotten, but we know from bitter experience how often sight is lost of his spiritual welfare. The policy of Plaid Cymru is governed by a concern for *the whole man*, and by a recognition of the fact that his needs are only very partially satisfied by a sufficiency of material goods. Its emphasis is upon a society organised for man

as a person—the State exists for man, industry and production are for man, language and culture are for man—and in consequence it believes that society should be ordered from the bottom upwards rather than from the top downwards. That this is the natural order is a fact we overlook in our pursuit of power and glory for the State, as in the policy of "export or die." These are an inversion of the natural order which lead not to justice but to oppression, not to freedom but to totalitarianism, not to peace but to war.

It is not proposed to discuss here the ability of Wales to support herself as a free nation; a convincing presentation of the facts will be found in "Can Wales Afford Self-Government?" by Drs. Noelle and D. J. Davies. We still await a full statement of the economic case against self-government. No one has yet attempted to prove why it is that, whereas countries far poorer and sometimes smaller than Wales can succeed so impressively, Wales herself would be notable for her failure to maintain her people. The statistics available to support the discussion are meagre indeed, but the significance of the Government's reluctance to publish separate statistics for Wales has not escaped remark.

This chapter will sketch, under six headings, some of the work to be done if Wales is to become a healthy and self-dependent community.

A BALANCED ECONOMY.

No country can have suffered more than has Wales from dependence upon a few extractive industries, and we have seen how vulnerable she has been for this reason to economic depression. The industry which she had was almost wholly centred in a few comparatively small industrial areas, and no determined effort has yet been made to create a healthier balance by developing industries in rural counties. In fact the Distribution of Industry Act has intensified the concentration in the former "depressed areas." A well-governed country has a certain balance between its provinces, fostered by a careful location of industry, which Wales lacks.

One of the main contributory reasons for this unbalance has been the utterly fortuitous development of Welsh transport facilities. Little attempt has ever been made to adapt the railroads to the needs of Wales as an entity. Built to provide ease of movement between Wales and England, so they continue. In consequence, if I wish to go from Llangadog, in North Carmarthenshire, to Caernarfon, I have to travel for over four hours to the English city of Chester, and having reached there I am farther from my destination than when I started. This lack of unified development is to be perpetuated by the Government's division of Wales, in its nationalisation of transport and railways, into two areas, each part of an English section. Thus the railroad system, which in Wales is so full of slow, single-track lines, is a main obstacle in the way of the balanced development of the land. Its disadvantages could be overcome in part by a well-developed road system, held together by a great central road running through the length of Wales. After at first rejecting this essential scheme completely the Government has now relegated it to some unspecified future date, when it will take the form of an improvement of existing roads rather than a new trunk road. A thousand miles of new trunk roads are scheduled to be built, but ten of them only will be found in Wales, and not one of those on the central road.

Another condition of balanced development is the provision of cheap power in the rural areas in the form of electrification. The success of the great TVA in America can be in large part attributed to the effort to equip the rural areas with as good electrical facilities as the towns. Her small size and the sources of power which are available to her make this a practicable aim for Wales.

Apart from greater attention to location of industry, Wales needs a better balance between heavy, secondary and light industries, and between industry and agriculture. It has already been stressed that an ambitious development of secondary industries is the country's greatest

industrial need. The Reconstruction Committee's Report spoke of "the vital role of electric power, the need for a new conception of coal as a raw material—the natural wealth upon which our power and chemical industries must be largely built." There is vast scope for development in this direction. W. C. Devereux, coming to Wales as a comparative stranger, said in his "Post War Reconstruction of Industry in South Wales":

"One of the first impressions I formed was that South Wales economy is based largely on a short-sighted policy of getting coal out of the earth and disposing of it as quickly as possible to other parts of the country and across the sea to raise power and provide a raw material for more enterprising foreign industries. This is a policy of quick returns but also of incredible short-sightedness. Coal is not just a fuel to be won by sweat and blood from the earth, then to be got rid of as soon as possible; it is the basic raw material and the source of power for a great many industries. It is a source of electric power, oil, synthetic rubber, plastics, and a thousand and one valuable chemical products, and these things should be produced where the coal is mined—here in South Wales—if the people are to benefit to the extent which is their natural right.

"These and the other considerable natural and industrial resources provide the fabric upon which, properly planned and boldly executed, industrial development can, either by public or private enterprise, weave a brilliant pattern of satisfying employment and prosperity."

Mr. Devereux proceeds to discuss the unrivalled value of Welsh coal as a source of electricity, and the variety of electro-metallurgical and electro-chemical industries which its cheap production would make possible in Wales, and gives particular attention to the possibilities of producing aluminium and magnesium. In his section on oil from coal, he reminds us that it was the advanced

development of the synthetic oil industry in Germany that made possible its waging of a major war. The products obtainable from coal are various; he describes them as:—

From one ton of coal—

Smokeless Fuel	....	7.5 cwt.
Butane and Propane	....	4.5 galls.
Motor Spirit	....	25.0 galls.
Diesel Oil	....	20.5 galls.
Refined Tar Acids	....	3.0 galls.
Paraffin Wax	....	20 lbs.
Pitch	....	130 lbs.

The tar acids are invaluable for the manufacture of plastics and disinfectants, and liquified butane and propane for producing calor gas. "If all the coal were used to the best advantage," he says, "then it is considered that the amount of coal available in South Wales for oil synthesis would be in the neighbourhood of eight million tons annually."

Under the present system of government these developments are likely to remain a dream. While the burden of taxation and other factors making for high production costs remain, these products of coal cannot be produced at a competitive price. The reality is closure of pits by the N.C.B. One could add to them the great field still awaiting development by Welsh initiative in the innumerable finished articles which can be made of the raw materials: iron, steel, wool, timber, etc., that are available in Wales. An important incidental advantage of such development would be its contribution to the elimination of the dread disease of silicosis from the Welsh coalfields. The Government has yet to evolve a constructive plan, of which an essential requirement would be alternative employment.

But the possibilities of industry in Wales must not lead to neglect of the great potentialities of Welsh agriculture, which must always be the foundation of Welsh economic and cultural life. The way to ensure a

healthy balance between it and industry is, not to retard industrial development, but to speed the vigorous development of agriculture.

The development of Welsh agriculture is imperative for reasons of social, economic and physical health. It has never been attempted with vision and steadfast purpose. For generations Welsh agriculture has decayed, so that it employs to-day less than 10% of our working population, and still farms are being abandoned throughout the land. Nevertheless Wales still produces considerably more food per head of the population than does England. The war and harsh economic circumstances have compelled government during the last ten years to give it greater encouragement, and its improved status and condition reflect the change of policy. But the change is not radical; far too little has been done, and in Wales, particularly in the hill country, development has done no more than touch the fringe of the possibilities. More research must be directed to the needs of Wales, but the splendid work already done at Aberystwyth and elsewhere still awaits implementation in practical policy. We need a Government which, unlike our London Government, will have its heart in the work.

Welsh agriculture can never be properly developed without a plan for Wales. Policy must be influenced by the conditions that obtain in the country, and since Welsh conditions differ in important matters from those in England—in climate, nature of terrain and size of farms—there should be a policy for Wales distinct from that for England, or regions in England. Wales enjoys a heavier rainfall than most of England, and this makes possible a concentration upon growing grass, whose possibilities as a crop are only now being realised. Grass rather than cereals must be the basis of Welsh agriculture, and we need an ambitious plan to conserve the nutriment in the crop when harvested. This requires grass-drying plants and other machinery suitable to the small size of Welsh farms, and the organisation of greater co-operation between them. Farms in Wales are usually family farms which do not always benefit from policy designed for bigger units; yet it is of great social and agricultural

importance that the family farm should be preserved and fostered, and also that they should be owned by their occupiers.

An effective policy must be adequately financed, and must give far more attention than has yet been given to the amenities, such as roads, piped water, power and light. It requires the unified development of the land and water resources of Wales and her transport facilities under a plan designed for Wales, and regarding her economy as a "seamless web." Nothing illustrates the need of developing Wales as a unit more clearly than the constant collision between Welsh needs in these matters and central policy. The War Office, hydro-electric schemes and the Forestry Commission have all run athwart the welfare of Wales. A plan for Wales, designed to produce a healthy balance in Welsh economic life, is conspicuously absent.

Many are influenced in their opposition to the healthy and well-balanced development of Wales as an economic unit by the Nineteenth Century notion of "division of labour" carried to an extreme between nation and nation. According to this idea, which still governs the thinking of many Welshmen on the position of their own country, Wales should specialise in that which she is best able to produce. Rigidly adhered to, this would confine her to the production of little more than coal, slate, milk and meat. Were the sole end of existence the production of the maximum wealth in the world with the minimum of labour, there would be a valid argument for the theory. But it would compel many nations besides Wales, and not excluding England, to abandon most of their social and economic aspirations. There are values in life with which economics must be harmonised, and we cannot allow the sacrifice of Wales to the supremacy of economic values.

Circumstances have in fact compelled an advance from the backward condition to which this theory would condemn Wales, but its influence is still found in the common contention that the Welsh economy must be one with the

English. This denial of the right of Wales to control her own economy rules out the possibility of a healthy balance and condemns her forever to the unhappy position of filling the interstices of the English economy. Those Welshmen who urge this have sometimes been known to say that Wales has an indisputable right to self-government in "the things that pertain to her soul." They are the counterparts in politics of certain theorists, Lutheran and others, in religion who would give man's body to the State so long as the Church's right to shepherd his soul were conceded. This tragic division of man in religion was equivalent to the abdication of the Church from all influence over policies and events which intimately affected the soul as well as the body. Our political dualists would hand over the Welshman's body to the English State so long as self-government for the soul were conceded. This dichotomy is as impossible in politics as it is in religion, and its practice in both must inevitably have tragic consequences.

The Welsh nation must live and develop as one. This requires economic as well as political self-government. Wales can "never achieve full nationhood so long as she is unable to offer to her citizens within her own borders that wide variety of occupations which modern science has made possible." The achievement of full nationhood, which is the aim of Plaid Cymru, cannot be attained without the restoration of the freedom of Wales.

GREATER SELF-SUFFICIENCY.

Greater economic self-sufficiency for Wales—perhaps self-support is a better word—is a corollary of the need for a balanced economy. When it is advanced by nationalists, some people leap to the conclusion that we aim at a completely self-sufficient Wales cut off from all contact with other nations. This, is, of course, a ridiculous notion which would not be mentioned were it not so common. Complete self-sufficiency, like complete sovereignty, is a chimera. Wales can and must be self-supporting, but even modern scientific advance does not

enable her to be completely self-sufficient. The creation of a well-balanced economy, however, and with it the possibility of greater economic stability, depend upon decreasing our dependence upon others. That there are many things which Wales can never produce for herself should not deter her from producing as many as she can.

If the importance of greater industrial self-sufficiency is clear, its necessity in agriculture is still more obvious. Not only has the cost of imported food risen sharply, but the amount available is decreasing. Lord Boyd Orr's warnings have driven home the fact that in a world whose population is increasing by a million a year, and whose soil fertility has in many countries been gravely impaired by exhaustion and erosion, each country must develop its own food potential wisely and fully. The country which imports food that could be grown on its own land performs a disservice to humanity. Wales has a clear duty to herself and to the world in this matter. As things are, a succession of bad harvests in America might threaten the countries of Britain with starvation. From whatever point of view we regard it, a policy of increasing self-support is justified.

England is now being compelled by circumstances to move in this direction, but the reaction of many to its advocacy for Wales is to protest that it is the cause of friction between nations, that it is isolationist and anti-international, though by some strange alchemy, the trade war is translated in their minds into the purest form of internationalism. Even Lord Keynes, however, admitted the fallacy in the contention that a high degree of self-sufficiency causes dangerous friction between nations. He went as far as to say that—

"The nations of the world should pursue a policy economic isolation if they wish to lessen the danger of international conflict. Ideas, knowledge, science, hospitality, travel—these are the things which should of their nature be international. But let goods be homespun wherever it is reasonably and conveniently possible, and, above all, let finance be primarily national."

The truth is that by increasing her self-sufficiency Wales would make her most positive contribution to world stability and peace. Nothing exacerbates bad feeling between nations more than a trade-war in which countries fight each other for markets for their exports. Unfortunately this conflict threatens to become more tense rather than to diminish. Whereas in past generations it was fought between capitalists, it now invades the international field with the full support of governments. The way to lessen the tension is to create in the countries involved an internal economy which will allow it peacefully to exchange its natural surpluses with others. World peace depends very largely upon the willingness of nations to organise their economy in a way which avoids the need for cut-throat competition for markets. This requires a healthy internal balance, which cannot be attained in Wales without a greater measure of self-sufficiency than we now have.

WIDER DISTRIBUTION OF PROPERTY.

Nationalists recognise that an essential condition of the free society is that its members have sufficient property to give them independence in face of master or State. Human freedom is perilously insecure where citizens are obliged to the State for everything. Even the humanitarian advance marked by the Welfare State would be bought at too high a price if its citizens yielded their freedom in return for its benefits. The danger to propertyless men can be illustrated by a simple incident, which could be multiplied many times, from pre-war Swansea. A young woman had appealed to the Court of Referees against a Ministry of Labour direction to go to work in England. The grounds for her appeal were that her mother had just died and her father needed her help at home. The Court rejected the appeal. "Don't you know," said the Chairman, "that it is the Government that is maintaining you now?" His freedom is never secure whose maintenance depends entirely upon the Government.

Property has been, and still is, the source of great abuse, but it is necessary to human welfare nevertheless. Its abuse has led many socialists to demand its abolition, but in the nationalist view, since so many of its greatest abuses spring from the concentration of property in too few hands, the remedy is, not to abolish it, but to distribute it more widely. Property, it has been said, is like manure, a bad thing when concentrated in a corner, but a good thing when spread over the land.

Therefore, Plaid Cymru supports a policy that encourages the worker to own his own house, and the farmer his farm, and that, in industry, would bring the employee a share not only in the work, but in the ownership of the concern. We stand against everything that makes for a rootless and property-less people. Families are happier and more stable, and both economic and political freedom become a greater reality when ownership is distributed so widely that if there are no very wealthy people neither are there any very poor.

DECENTRALISATION OF RESPONSIBILITY.

Decentralisation of responsibility, applied to the economic and political fields alike, is of the essence of nationalist policy, but it stands athwart the trend of the times. The power of the State to-day has increased, is increasing and ought to be diminished. Its true function, as Lord Lindsay has said, is to make society more of a society. This is a function of supreme importance, but it is the function of a servant, not of a master. When the State forgets that its function is to serve, when it seeks to dominate society and to absorb the life of the community, then it is time, if the springs of community are not to be dried, to deflate it and confine it within its proper limits.

How easy it is for men at the head of the State to delude themselves into believing that the State is serving, not dominating, community by working out its great Plan for society. It would do them good to look at the process from the standpoint of a member of the small

Welsh nation who sees Wales being crushed under the weight of their beneficent designs. They would see how ruthlessly values are sacrificed to ensure the success of the Plan. They may have been inspired by the most generous of intentions, but once the huge engines of the State began to move, the success of the Plan was the important thing, not persons, nor families, nor neighbourhoods, nor the nation, but The Plan. Nothing must impede its smooth progress; personal rights, community values and justice for a small nation can be "foreign matter" that causes friction in the great machine, and as such must be wiped away. At the controls are the bureaucrats whose one delight is to see the whole working like a clock, and whose greatest anguish is to have to change a comma in The Plan.

This regimentation may be more "scientific" than a community of freely co-operating and responsible persons, and it may lead to some impressive statistics, but it must be abhorrent to those for whom the most important values in government are personal.

Concentration of power in the hands of a few is alien to the policy of Plaid Cymru, which stands for radical decentralisation, not only from London to Wales, but within Wales herself. That is why it has stood for increasing rather than diminishing the powers of local authorities, and why it opposes the abolition of small authorities. This inspired its fight against the abolition of the Welsh County Councils when the Local Government Boundary Commission advocated the creation of a few regional councils in their place. It believes that local government should be local, and deplores the reduced status of the smaller authorities.

No activity of the inflated, centralised State is more abhorrent to nationalists than its measures of military and industrial conscription. These have been withstood without compromise. In them we see the full extent of the power of the English State to-day over the life of Wales and her people. It claims not only our time and our money, but, in conscription, our very lives. For ten

years it has taken men from Wales and set them not only in the armed forces but also in English industry, and not only men, but women too. It still has the power to-day to take the youth of Wales as conscripts for its armies, and to take the manhood and womanhood of Wales to tend machines outside their native land. It can compel men to stay in the coal mine or on the farm. These powers it arrogated to itself in face of the opposition of the Welsh people, of whose parliamentary representatives only one in three voted in favour of conscription in peace-time. The Welsh attempt to exclude Wales from the National Service Act was defeated by the overwhelming English majority. Therefore, despite our national opposition, conscription is imposed upon our country—a striking example of Welsh freedom! But even had every Welsh M.P. betrayed his nation by supporting conscription, still the English State would have no moral right to impose it upon the Welsh nation. For another nation to use Wales in this way is the supreme violation of her separate nationhood. There can be no compromise in our opposition to this most extreme and immoral of the manifestations of our national servitude. Our acquiescence would indicate that the enslavement of Wales is complete. If we accept conscription then we deserve to be serfs.

Transference of labour is in the same category as conscription. Here, too, we have that violation of personal and national rights by a centralised State in which men lose their personality in a "labour pool," and a nation loses her character in an atomised mass. No movement whose policy is based upon a belief in the infinite value of human personality can compromise with this expression of centralism. No movement which stands for the integrity of the Welsh nation can acquiesce in the compulsory transfer of one Welshman out of his land.

Decentralisation must be extended from the political to the economic field. The organisation of industry has so far followed the trend to centralisation that measures of nationalisation which were to have enhanced the responsibility of the worker have signally failed to do so. The

miner and the railwayman have no more responsibility in their work to-day than under the capitalist system; their humanity is as unsatisfied under the new as under the old regime. The group of combines which controlled most of the coal industry has been replaced by one "big boss" who is just as impersonal and even more remote. This is a very different situation from that pictured by the miner a generation ago, when the emphasis was upon real self-government for the worker *at his work*. "Men freed from the double centralised autocracy of capitalist trust and capitalist State," wrote G. D. H. Cole, in 1920, "are not likely to be anxious to make for themselves a new industrial Leviathan." Yet that is precisely what has been created.

Amongst the employees as well as the State employer the urge to centralisation has swept all before it. A striking instance was the sinking of the identity of the South Wales Miners Federation in the "National" Union of Mineworkers. Plaid Cymru strove for the retention of the independence of the Welsh Union, and continues to oppose giantism in the unions as well as in industrial organisation. Were the unions decentralised in Wales on a national basis, the Welsh T.U.C. for which Plaid Cymru stands would become an immediate possibility.

The bigger and more centralised an organisation, the more impersonal it becomes, the less amenable to its members are those at the top, and the less capable of responsibility are those at the base. The smaller the organisation the greater the responsibility possible to its members and the greater their comprehension of and interest in its work. The widespread belief that industry gains in efficiency as it increases in size is belied by the researches of such men as Ralph Borsodi, which show that the methods of two-thirds of the mass-production plants in America are technologically unjustified, and that :

"the economies effected by mass-production are offset by the increased costs involved in mass distribution over great areas, so that local production by individuals or co-operating groups is more economical than mass production in vast centralised factories."

If democracy is to be more than a counting of heads once in five years, then the increasing tendency to centralisation, with its ever-present danger of totalitarianism, must be opposed, and the trend reversed in the direction of a radically decentralised State in which society will have greater freedom of development. Whether this is possible in any but a small country which can have no ambitions to being a "great power" is a debateable matter.

A CO-OPERATIVE ECONOMY.

The more decentralised an economy the better suited it is to the co-operative ideal advocated by Plaid Cymru, which would extend its practice through the field of production as well as consumption. The co-operative order in commerce, industry, agriculture and local government, is fitted only to a community unafraid of responsibility. In a successful co-operative order responsibility rests with each individual person, and in that sense it retains the virtue in individualism without its abuses. But it is equally true that co-operation is possible only in a community which enjoys a high degree of cohesion among men who are prepared voluntarily to subordinate their own interests to those of the whole, and in this sense it practices the virtue in collectivism. "It is," says Poisson, "essentially solidarity put into practice." The policy is developed in Dr. D. J. Davies' "Towards an Economic Democracy," and those interested in a fuller discussion of the subject cannot do better than turn to that stimulating little book.

Opportunities have recently presented themselves of experimenting in co-operative ownership on an ambitious scale in industry and agriculture, but the government has revealed a lack of sympathy which amounts to antagonism to any variation in its nostrum of centralised control. When the first of the anthracite mines, the Tarenni Colliery was closed, on the grounds that it was losing money heavily, nationalists urged that a chance be given to those employed in the mine to run it as a co-operative venture. So shocking a departure from the orthodoxy of

bureaucratic nationalisation, however, found no favour with the authorities, so that the response of the miners was indecisive. In Merioneth, the scheme to run the Glanllyn estate by a large co-operative society of farmer-occupiers had matured as far as the purchasing stage, when the Government stepped in and destroyed the promise of one of the most interesting experiments in co-operative control yet seen in Wales or anywhere else, by taking the whole estate in lieu of death duties. The community of farmers involved, one of the most cultured in all Wales, had already proved their ability to run a highly successful co-operative venture in the Creamery known as Hufenfa Meirion, and are again proving it in their co-operative woollen factory in Dinas Mawddwy. A government anxious to see its citizens accepting greater responsibility for their economic life would have given the Glanllyn experiment in the land of Robert Owen, every encouragement, but a socialist government which stands for centralised responsibility and control destroyed it. It is a far cry from the state-socialism of to-day to Keir Hardie.

One of the main factors in the deepening economic crisis is the failure of employees in the heavy and other industries to make the effort of which they are capable. This is largely the heritage of the traditional attitude of the trade unions towards employers, but it could only be afforded as long as Britain was wealthy. To-day an impoverished Britain cannot afford "go slow" tactics. But to drum that into men's heads is not enough; the traditional attitude is too deeply ingrained and the real fear of throwing fellow-workers out of employment by working hard is too strong. For the sake of the community some way has to be found of fostering a responsible attitude which will enable men to give their best in their work. Compulsion must be rejected. The way is to give them responsibility. Nowhere is this more important than in the coal industry. We *must* have coal; the best way to get it is to draw the men into a system of co-operative ownership, so that they will feel that they are really working for themselves, and will impose upon themselves an effective voluntary discipline.

The co-operative solution is advocated by Plaid Cymru on grounds both of principle and expediency. It stands for a Welsh co-operative democracy.

A WELSH WALES.

The purpose of acting on the principles outlined in this chapter is to create the conditions in which Welsh nationhood can develop naturally. Wales must be more than a community; she must be truly a Welsh community, Welsh in speech and in her whole way of life. Wherever they have been divorced, the people of our land must be reunited with their Welsh heritage in history and culture, in thought and language. No institutions should be neglected which can further this work. Though there are some agencies which cannot be made a strength to Welsh life until there is a Welsh government, others can to-day become a greater support than they are. Drama is playing an important part in the life of Wales to-day, but it has a far greater potential importance which cannot be realised without the lead and example of a national theatre. The government has earmarked a great sum for an English national theatre; Wales needs her own, which shall produce plays in the Welsh language as well as in English. Assistance is needed, too, in the publication of Welsh books, particularly of books for children; direct government support for these, which is given in other countries, should be regarded as complementary to a Welsh educational system.

Broadcasting in Wales should be controlled by an independent Welsh Broadcasting Corporation transmitting seven or eight hours a day in programmes of which the greater part should be in the Welsh language. Listeners have a choice of many other programmes in the English language, but of no others in Welsh. Self-government in broadcasting is a measure of cultural autonomy that even anti-nationalists can support. The Welsh Corporation would be the obvious body to control

television in Wales, and there should be no need to have to fight again for the recognition of Wales as an entity in this field.

Most important of all cultural institutions is the educational system which does so much to mould the mind and character of the nation, and which has been so active in the past in the work of destroying the language and culture of Wales. Wales has now more autonomy in this sphere than in any other, and in recent years a notable series of pamphlets published by the Welsh Department of the Ministry of Education have marked, despite the weakness of their language policy, a great advance in Welsh educational thought. This thought cannot be translated into action without the full co-operation of local authorities and school staffs. The report on "The Future of Secondary Education in Wales," declares :

"It is plain common sense that the teacher in the Welsh school must build upon the foundation of Welsh traditions, and of that national life which is the inheritance of every Welsh child and Welsh family. . . . The aim of the schools of Wales should be to produce a nation aware of its own traditions and values, and anxious also to co-operate with other nations in securing the "peace and well-being of mankind."

When the schools and colleges of Wales have built upon this foundation we will have for the first time in centuries a truly Welsh system of education. "Welsh education must be in line with Welsh life," says the report. "This principle is not to be confined to the teaching of geography and history. It applies equally well to the teaching of literature, music, art and religion, and to the life of the whole school. . . we do ask that the schools of Wales should concern themselves with Wales."

That is the door through which the rising generation of Wales should be entering into possession of their national heritage.

The educational system has a vital part to play in recovering the whole of Wales for the national language. It cannot do this alone, but it is our most important instrument, without whose active co-operation the work cannot be accomplished. Two languages are spoken in Wales to-day, but the mother tongue and the national tongue is Welsh. The misfortune of our nation is that the majority of her people have been deprived of the national and mother tongue of their land, and this terrible wound cannot be healed without the whole-hearted support of the schools and colleges. The possibility of a full, happy and civilised life for the men and women of Wales depends upon their success.

The national tongue has yet to be recognised as an official language in Wales, which is the only country in the British Empire whose national language is not accorded official status. Even the ramshackle old Austrian Empire, where ten or more languages were spoken, had no privileged "language of the State," says Frederick Hertz ; everybody had a right to the use of his language in courts, the administration and schools. The language of Wales, however, is still denied official status, despite the great petition presented in its favour, and signed by nearly half a million Welshmen. The Coalition Government in 1943 refused to grant the demand. A renewed demand was made in the Spring of 1949, but the Labour Government would take no action. Nothing indicates the subordinate position of Wales more clearly than the English Government's obstinate refusal to acknowledge our language, spoken here a thousand years before English was heard, as an official language in our own land.

VI.—THE WAY TO FREEDOM.

It is not enough to give intellectual assent to the case for Welsh self-government. Effective action to secure it is our most urgent need to-day. That action must be political, for the decisions that affect our social life most profoundly to-day are made in the field of politics. The recall to Welsh living is a recall to Welsh politics.

How are we to act effectively in politics? If Wales is to win her freedom by constitutional methods, the ultimate act of recognition must come from an English Party Government. How is this to be secured? That is the crux of the matter. The answer given by the mass of Welshmen during the last two generations—the question was not asked before then—has been that the only way is to act inside one of the major English Parties, and, by a process of "burrowing from within," to get it to place Welsh self-government high amongst its aims and to act to secure it. Scores of successful political careers testify to the fact that this solution has been a source of profound gratification to individual Welshmen. But the condition of their motherland speaks eloquently of its abject failure to attain its ostensible goal.

There have been times when it seemed that the policy of working inside the English Parties might succeed. Although it was always too easy a way for those who took it, and one which did nothing to foster the inner growth of the nation, yet it was reasonable enough to try it once. "He is a fool who does not climb Fujiyama once," says the Japanese proverb, "and he is a damned fool who climbs him twice." Welshmen have tried the way of the English Parties, not once and not twice, but with dreary repetition.

They were encouraged in this method in the last century when there were but two Parties, of which one, the Liberal Party, stood for the cause of "nations rightly struggling to be free." The Conservative Party was always an imperialist Unionist Party, which had no sympathy with any patriotism in these islands except the English variety, and it never could understand why Welshmen should not want to be Englishmen. But the Liberal Party under Gladstone, before it succumbed to Chamberlain's new imperialism, was felt to be different. So we see Tom Ellis and the youthful Lloyd George, in the 80's and 90's of the last century, being returned to Parliament with a brilliant band of fellow-Welshmen, as Liberal nationalists, who stood with the Party for Welsh Home Rule. On his return, Lloyd George declared that "Through Home Rule alone can this generation reap the fruits of its political efforts." That was sixty years ago, when Liberals held every seat in Wales but three. Sixty years is a long time, and the last sixty years, so full of revolutionary change, have been longer than most. They have seen more nations achieving self-government than has any period in history. But they have not seen Wales taking a step towards her freedom; none of the powers exercised by the London Government sixty years ago are to-day exercised by Wales. They saw Lloyd George becoming Prime Minister in 1916, and between 1906 and 1918 they saw thirty-six Welsh M.P.'s receiving some office or honour. Welshmen were getting on in the world as never before, but Wales was not getting on. She was dying.

Never had an English Party a better opportunity of carrying out its programme of Welsh self-government than the Liberal Party had in that period. Yet in 1922, when the Liberals finally went out of power, Wales was as far from self-government as it was forty years before—farther, indeed, since her dismal history during the preceding generation had depressed her morale beyond measure. It was still usual to pay lip-service to the ideal of Welsh freedom. Lloyd George himself did so on many

occasions, as when in 1921 and 1922, deputations pressed him to establish a Secretary for Wales, he told them "to go for the big thing." But the Party of which he was the leader had no stomach for the fight, which had no votes in it, and it could afford to do nothing about it since so many of its protagonists were safely lodged within its ranks. As long as Welshmen have not enough courage and conviction to act for Wales independently of the English Parties, English Government knows well how safe it is in ignoring Welsh demands. Apparently there are votes in the issue once again, for the Liberals in their 1949 Conference at Hastings have revived a cautious policy of self-government. But it is fitting that Dr. William George, who has given so much of his life to the Liberal cause, should pronounce the just verdict, which has the power of understatement: "The Liberals do not deserve the confidence of Wales," he says in "Atgof a Myfyr," because "they have had their chance and have failed to make the most of it."

The chance which the Liberals had and failed to take should have been a sufficient warning to Welshmen against hoping to gain national freedom by working through an English Party. But it did not prevent another generation putting their trust in the Labour Party. At the beginning of the century, when the Party was led by Keir Hardie, who was a declared supporter of self-government, and who had great admiration for the fight of the independent Irish Party at Westminster, this was understandable. Faith was apparently justified when Welsh self-government was placed on the Party's programme in 1918, and when Ramsay Macdonald stated in the same year that it would be one of the first measures of reconstruction after the war if Labour were in power. Morgan Jones, M.P., defining its attitude to Home Rule, said that the Labour Party's "one message to the people is: Govern Yourself!" Arthur Henderson, to whose efforts the Party owed so much, declared on its behalf that "the claims of Wales to self-government were strictly analogous to those of Ireland.... It is hardly

possible to conceive an area in which a scheme of Parliamentary self-government could be established with better chances of success.... Given self-government, Welsh might establish itself as a modern utopia." If "utopia" is the last word to describe Wales in the inter-war years, this is not because the Labour Party carried out its Welsh programme but because it failed to try. After one bitter experience of Government, it still declared in its official programme, in 1928, that it would establish Parliaments for Wales and Scotland. In 1944, its North Wales leader stated his position with force and clarity: "I want Self-government for Wales," said Mr. H. T. Edwards, "I want a Parliament for Wales to fully control the destinies of Wales with one important exception... the defence of these islands." Before the General Election, 1945, Mr. James Griffiths declared: "I urge a measure of self-government for Wales."

If declarations by English Parties and their Welsh members meant anything, there would to-day be a Parliament in Wales. Instead, we have a group of government appointees who meet in secret once in three months. Betrayal? Yes, but Welshmen have themselves to blame for it. We had generations of experience to teach us that the promises of English Parties and politicians to Wales are worthless unless there is a way of compelling them to fulfil them. We failed to organise ourselves to compel action. The English Government will never act for Wales on grounds of principle, or else it would have acted years ago; an imperial government, it acts for nations in its Empire only when it can no longer safely resist. India, Pakistan and Ceylon have been granted Commonwealth Status "reluctantly," as Mr. Herbert Morrison said, because it could no longer be refused them.

There was nothing to prevent the Labour Government giving Wales a measure of self-government during the last four years. It boasts in "Labour Believes in Britain," 1949, that "There is hardly one of our more than forty

colonial territories which has not moved some way towards self-government in the past four years. Labour's aim is democratic self-government for the Colonies until in due course they attain full responsibility in both central and local government." So we see peoples everywhere, of every race and colour and of all degrees of civilisation and intelligence, winning self-government. But Wales has taken no step from her servitude. Instead of granting her the institutions of freedom, the Labour Government has dissected her in its nationalisation measures, conscripted her people, seized her land for the War and other Departments, denied her such elementary rights as a broadcasting corporation, coal, electricity and transport boards, a national parks commission, a central trunk road, an economic planning authority, to mention but a few matters. Its genius has been lavished on seeing how little it could give Wales. It could well afford to ignore Welsh needs with impunity because it felt sure of the pathetic, dog-like loyalty of the Welsh. The English Parties know that as long as Wales does not act politically as a nation, they need do no more than give some plum jobs to the boys, and throw a few judiciously chosen crumbs—advisory committees, ministers in the Cabinet and the like—to the masses.

The evidence is solidly on one side; the one effective way of acting for Wales is to act as a Welsh people in an independent Welsh movement. Welshmen of goodwill who are anxious to do something for Wales are, by staying in the English Parties, squandering their effectiveness.

But we are adjured not to be impatient, not to hurry towards the goal, but to hasten slowly. As if the history of the last hundred years in Wales warned us of the dangers of hurrying towards self-government! It is because Welshmen have accepted so avidly such complacent advice that the nation's life is in jeopardy to-day. We are face to face with the crisis of our national existence. This is no time for soporific words but for a new dynamic to energise the nation into resolute action. Generations have seen her forced continually on the

defensive, compelled to protect and protest instead of building and creating, frustrated on all hands, with no national power of initiative, her vital resources ebbing, and the forces arrayed against her growing in power with every year. Little wonder that so many of her people have grown sceptical and cynical about her life and prospects. Yet the same years have seen the small peoples of Europe and elsewhere building communities in the vigour of their freedom which are examples to us to-day. Not one of the Scandinavian countries has the advantages of Wales, yet the accomplishment of each one puts her to shame. The small Baltic countries were poor and inexperienced when they gained their short-lived freedom, yet Hampden Jackson can say that "on the shores of the Baltic were accomplished the greatest social experiments of our generation." Why should it not be possible for an observer to say of Wales a generation ahead that "on her hills were accomplished the greatest social experiments of our generation"? It would be possible, had Wales the freedom that the Baltic nations enjoyed and the spirit that inspired them. The power lies latent in her nationality. It must be awakened and harnessed to a great constructive task.

Wales needs political freedom above all else to-day. She needs a Parliament on her own soil within the next few years. Thus equipped she can march towards the future with renewed hope and purpose. The alternative is grim indeed.

A Parliament for Wales can be won if the nation gathers her forces in a concentrated effort. There *must* be single-minded concentration upon the objective. Action must be resolute and inspired by a sense of great urgency. The fate of the ancient nation of Wales is in the hands of this generation. If it rises to the level of history's demands, Welsh men and women of future centuries will call it blessed. Let us act for that future "nation yet unborn." Countless generations of the past have succoured and enriched the life of Wales. Let ours be the generation to win for her a place again among the free nations of the world.